

THE
WITNESSES
TO
CHRISTIANITY;
OR,

The Certainty of our
F A I T H and *H O P E*;

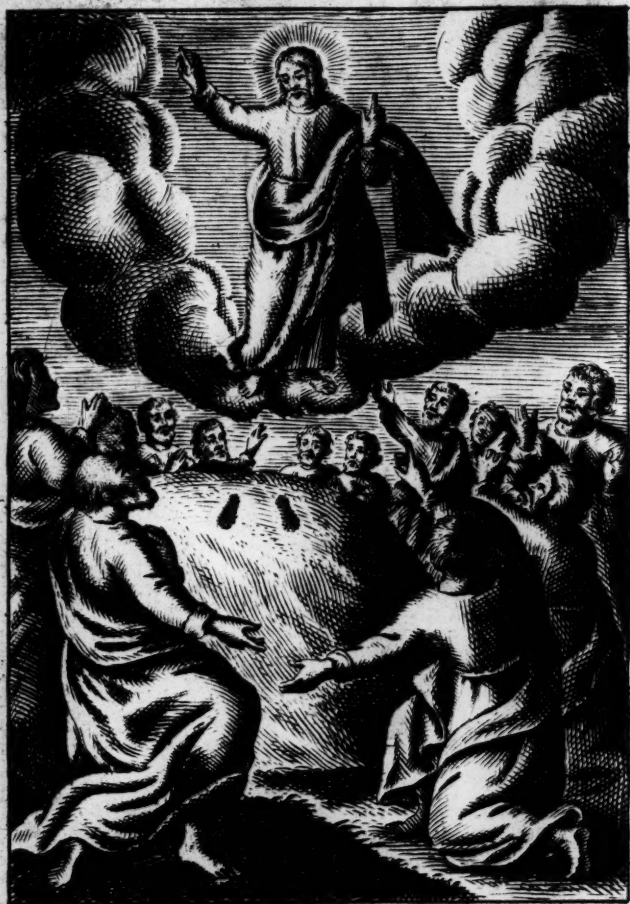
In a Discourse upon
I S. J O H N V. II.

P A R T II.

By SYMON PATRICK, D.D.
Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

L O N D O N,
Printed by *E. Flesher*, for *R. Royston*, Book-
seller to His most Sacred Majesty:
MDCLXXVII.

Our Lords Ascension.



Acts. 1: 9. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up, & a Cloud receiued him out of their sight. 10. And while they stedfastly looked toward heaven, behold two men stood by them in white apparell. 11. Which also said, this same Iesus shall so come, as you haue seen him go into heaven.

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317
PRESIDENTIAL

OF

THE UNITED STATES

AND

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN WASHINGTON, D. C.

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T O

The most Reverend Father in God,

GILBERT,

By Divine Providence, Lord Archbishop of

CANTERBURY,

Primate of all *England*, and Metro-
politan; and one of His Maje-
stie's most Honourable
Privy Council, &c.

May it please Your Grace

TO cast your eye upon the *Second Part*
of that *Work*, the *First Part* of
which I took the confidence to address unto
your Grace the last year. It is concerning
that **ETERNALL LIFE** which
was with the Father, as *St. John speaks*;
and now is manifested to us by his Son *Jesus*
Christ, who hath published the most gracious
Purposes

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The Epistle Dedicatory.

Purposes of God the Father towards us. The thoughts of which, as they cannot but be at all times exceeding welcome to Devout Christians, (especially to those who are faithfull Ministers in Christ's Kingdom,) so never more, then when they see their Departure is at hand. In which regards I doubt not this Treatise will be acceptable to your Grace, because it contains a Description and full Assurance of that happy Life which you shortly expect. For there is nothing so reviving in our declining Age, as to think that the passage out of this Life leads us not to Death, but to Immortality : and that it will not take away our Happiness from us, but give us a purer enjoyment of it : Pleasure not mixed with a mortall body, but sincere and free from Grief and Sorrow. For when we shall be set at liberty and delivered from this Prison, we shall come thither where there is no Labour, no Sighing, nor Old age : but a Life of perfect ease and tranquillity, that breeds no trouble, nor any other evill ; but is serene and clear
in

The Epistle Dedicatory.

in an immovable Rest and Peace. Where the happy Inhabitants sweetly contemplate the nature of things; and philosophize, not for Popularity and the Theatre, but for the finding out solid and everlasting Truth.

*I have but translated the words * in Axiocho, of Plato * (or of some other Phi. P. 370. losopher that hath borrowed his name,) who was much pleased in such thoughts as these; though he made but uncertain guesses at that blessed state, which our Lord hath so clearly revealed, and so strongly demonstrated; that we have reason, with never-ceasing joy, both in life and death to give him thanks for so great a Grace. For as there is nothing beyond this that the heart of man can wish; so nothing of such importance to our present Happiness in this World. For which cause the Jews have thought fit to expunge those from the number of Israelites, who do not believe the Immortality of the Soul, and the Resurrection of the dead: and to resolve,*

The Epistle Dedicatory.

that they shall have no part in the World to come, though they otherwise live orderly, and observe the Precepts of the Law. For such men, they saw, opened a door to all licentiousness; and could never doe so much good by any other means, as they did hurt by subverting this Belief.

*Which I have endeavoured therefore to establish by such Arguments, as they were ignorant of, till our Blessed Lord and Saviour appeared: who, as St. Matthew observes out of the Psalmist, uttered things which had been kept secret from the foundation of the World. Maimonides himself saith, in his last Chapter of his Book concerning Kings, that at the coming of Christ, things hidden and profound shall be laid open and revealed to all. Which is true of nothing more, I have shewn, then of that which is the greatest desire of all mankind, immortall Life. Of which though I have not treated according to the dignity of the Subject; yet I am confident I have laid a
good*

The Epistle Dedicatory.

good Foundation, to be improved by the labours of those who have more skill and more leisure. And it is a very great satisfaction, to have done any thing (though never so small) for the honour of our ever-Blessed Lord and Master: whom it is the highest glory in the world to serve in faithfulness and truth. For He will not fail to reward such services with an ample recompence; being a Prince so great, that nothing is beyond his Power; and so gracious, that his Servants have reason to expect the best effects of his Good will. Which may very well content us, whatsoever usage we meet withall at present: And should mightily excite us, as St. Chrysostom often and earnestly exhorts*, neglecting the suspitions, and the reproaches, and the praises too of men, to study this one thing alone; how to be conscious to our selves of no evill: which will bring us in the end, both here and hereafter, the greater glory.

* Homil. 87. in
Matth. p. 539.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

The God of all Grace bless this Work to the settling and increasing this holy Faith and Resolution in all our hearts; whereby we shall also obtain the sweetest foretastes of the Joys of the future State. And may your Grace be blest with many of them, to support the infirmities of Old age; and having finished your days, have an easie passage to that better Life; and there receive from the Chief Pastour, when he shall appear, the Crown of glory which fadeth not away. Which is the hearty Prayer of

My Lord,

YOUR GRACE'S

in all dutifull Observance,

ST. PATRICK.

TO THE
READER.

I Have no other reason to give for adding one more to that heap of Books, which men complain is already grown too great; but the hope I have of doing some service to our Lord, by making a farther search (as I promised in the conclusion of the former Part of this Work) into the Testimony of these Divine Witnesses, concerning ETERNALL LIFE.

The Hope of which is the most precious Legacy the Son of God hath left us; the Hinge upon which all Religion turns: without which it would be the greatest Vanity (as *Lactantius* * often * *Lib. vi.* speaks) to obey the commands of *Ver-* *c. 9. vii. 4.* tue; for whose sake we must endure not onely many Labours, but oftentimes sore Calamities. *We were born* (as he discour-
ses elsewhere *) *to acknowledge God the* * *Lib. vii.*
Maker of us and of the World: whom we *6.*
therefore

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therefore acknowledge, that we may worship him; and therefore worship him, that we may receive Immortality for a reward of our labours, (because his service engages us in the greatest:) and therefore Immortality is bestowed on us for a recompence, that, being made like to the Angels, we may serve the Father and Lord of all for ever, and be the Eternall Kingdom of God. This is the Chief of all things, this is the Secret of God, this is the Mystery of the World: to which they are strangers, who, following their present pleasures, have addicted themselves to terrestriall and frail goods; and sunk their Souls, born to celestiall enjoyments, into delights as deadly as they are muddy and dirty.

And it is the singular Priviledge of Christians, as I have demonstrated, to be assured of a Good so great, by so many most credible Witnesses: whose Testimony none can refuse, but they that will be so absurd as to believe none at all. The *Father*, the *Word*, the *Holy Ghost*, the *Water*, the *Bloud*, and the *Spirit*, declare so unanimously and so plainly, that the Lord *Jesus* will give Eternall Life to his followers; that what the Oratours said in flattery to the *Athenians* in the
time

To the Reader.

time of the Chremonidian War, may in truth be said to us, if we alter but one word : that *other things indeed are common to us with the rest of the World* ; τῶ δ' ἐπὶ τῷ ἑαυτὸν ἀνθρώπῳ πέρυσαν ὁδὸν Χριστιανὸς εἰδέναι μόνος, but the way that leads men to heaven is known to Christians alone. Who have a manifold grace bestowed on them ; enjoying not onely a Promise of Eternall Life, (which the World never had before,) but that Promise attested by so many Witnesses : who tell us also, it is in the power of him that died for us, to conferr it on us ; as well as to shew us by what means we may become so exceeding Blessed.

Athenaus
in Deipno-
soph. L. vi.
p. 250.

The serious Reader, I doubt not, will be sensible of all this, when he hath perused the following Work. In which I have endeavoured to satisfy those also, who wish I had said something of that part of this Record which I undertook to explain ; **THESE THREE ARE ONE.** Which words, I have reason to believe, (whatsoever the Socinians have pretended to the contrary,) were always a part of this Holy Scripture. For they are alledged by Saint Cyprian in his Book of the *Unity of the Catholick Church* ; to shew

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shew how dangerous it is to break that Unity, by the clashing of our wills, which not onely coheres by celestiall Sacraments, but proceeds, as he speaks, from the Divine firmness. *For our Lord saith, I and the Father are one. And again, it is written of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, Et hi tres unum sunt, And these three are one.* By which that the Apostle would have us to understand, not merely the consent of their Testimony, (though that is not to be excluded,) but the Unity of their Nature or Essence, we have great reason to think. Because there can no account be given, why he should not use the same form of speech here, which follows, when he speaks of the other three Witnesses; if these three in Heaven were no otherwise three then those three in Earth. Which being admitted, (and if we take in the constant sense of the Church to interpret the words, we cannot make any farther doubt of it,) that *these three are one* in their Essence; then it is certain there are *Three Persons*, whose Essence is one and the same. For else there would not be *three* Witnesses in heaven; but onely *one*: which would cross the design of the Apostle; whose scope is, to shew that our Faith doth not rely upon a single

To the Reader.

single Testimony. And indeed the Holy Scriptures, in other places, ascribe such Actions and Works to each of them, as are proper to Persons: which is a sufficient warrant to the Church, to express the distinction that is between them by this Name. *Non quia Scriptura dicit*, (as St. Augustine * speaks concerning this very business,) *sed quia Scriptura non contradicit*; Not because the Scripture saith they are Persons, but because the Scripture doth not say the contrary: but rather, I may adde, directs us to say they are, for the reason before mentioned. "When humane scant-ness (as that Holy Doctour of the Church goes on) endeavoured to express in words that which it conceived in the secret of the mind concerning our Lord God the Creatour, it was afraid to say there were *three Essences*; lest any diversity should be thought to be in that highest Equality: and on the other side, to say there were not *tria quedam, really three*, was to fall in to the heresy of *Sabellius*. For it is certain there is the *Father*, and the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*; and that the *Son* is not the *Father*, nor the *Holy Ghost* the *Father* or the *Son*. It sought therefore what three it should call them;
"and

* Lib. vii.
de Trinitate,
cap. 4.

To the Reader.

“ and it said, *three Persons*; (as the *La-*
“ *tine Church* speaks;) by which Name
“ it would not have any diversity under-
“ stood, but onely singularity. That
“ not onely *Unity* should be there con-
“ ceived, because we say there is one
“ *Essence*; but a *Trinity* also, because
“ we say there are three Persons.

This Faith we ought to defend; and
in this simple belief we ought, I have
shewn, to acquiesce: We ought to de-
fend it, because it is the Catholick Faith,
revealed in the Holy Scriptures; accor-
ding as they have been always understood
by the Church of *Christ*. *For it is suffici-*

* Lib. iii.
contra Eu-
nomium,
p. 126.

ent (as St. Gregory *Nyssen* * excellently
discourses against those that demanded
more proof of these things) *to the demon-*
stration of this Doctrine, that we have a
Tradition descended to us, like an inheri-
tance, by succession from the Apostles; and
transmitted through the hands of holy men
that followed them. They that will inno-
centate, need the help of mighty arguments; if
they will go about to shake the Faith, not of
men built on the sand, and wavering like
Euripus, but grave, settled, and constant in
their opinion. And while we see nothing
but mere discourse against it, τὸ ἐπεὶ ἡ ἀ-

To the Reader.

And al' xlviii; who is there so silly and brutish, as to think the Doctrine of the Evangelists and Apostles, and of those Lights that succeeded them in the Church, to be weaker then their Babble without demonstration?

But we shall not wholly avoid the imputation of folly, unless we also rest satisfied in this plain belief; not busying our selves in more curious enquiries. For the greatest Lights in the Church, I have shewn, will lead us no farther; but tell us we shall groap in darkness, if we will needs pry too much into this Mystery. Which we ought to discourse of as becomes Divines, not Philosophers. Lest, as *Henricus à Gandava* censures *Albertus Magnus*, (in his Book of Ecclesiasticall Writers,) whilst we follow too much the subtilty of secular Philosophy, we cloud the splendour of Theologicall purity. We must remember that we are men, and that our understandings are but shallow: which ought not therefore to venture boldly into such depths as that of the Divine Essence. There is nothing so much becomes us, when we think of God, as an holy fear and reverence, producing in us low thoughts of our selves. Without which

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we are not like to be illuminated from above; nor can we, should we know never so much, be acceptable to God. *Quid enim prodest alta de Trinitate disputare, si careas humilitate, unde displiceas Trinitati?* (as Thomas à Kempis honestly speaks:) For what will it profit thee to dispute loftily of the Trinity, if, through want of humility, thou displeasest the Trinity?

The way to ETERNALL LIFE, it is certain, lies in that rode; which we shall be in danger to miss, if we give our selves too great a liberty of disputing about things so much above our reach. We ought to be aware of this artifice of the grand Deceiver: who is wont to draw us secretly from attending to our known duty, while we are amusing our selves with sublime speculations. Which the holy Fathers of the Church have carefully observed, and caution'd us against by their severe reproofs. *What means (saith Saint Gregory Nazianzen *) this ambitious humour of disputing, and itch of the tongue? what new disease and unsatiable appetite is this? While our hands are bound, why do we arm our tongue? Hospitality, Brotherly love, Conjugall affection, Virginity, are no longer praised. Feeding the*
poor,

To the Reader.

poor, Psalmody, Nocturnall Stations, Tears are not now in request. We do not bring under the body by Fastings; nor leave it a while, to go to God by Prayer. We do not bring the worse in subjection to the better; the Dust, I mean, to the Spirit. We do not make our life a meditation of death. Our Passions are not mastered. Forgetting our heavenly Originall, we let anger swell and rage; and take no care to suppress that pride and haughtiness which will at last lay us low. We do not chastise irrational sadness, nor foolish pleasure, nor unchaste laughter, nor disorderly affects, nor unsatiable hearing, nor immoderate talking, nor absurd thoughts, nor any of those things by which the Evil one takes advantage against us to our ruine. There is nothing like to this; but quite contrary, we give liberty to other mens evill affections, and (like Princes when they have got the Victory) require nothing of them, but onely that they be on our side, and take our part: though they oppose God the more impiously and audaciously.

These things, it seems, were then too manifest to be denied; and notwithstanding these reproaches of holy men, the humour propagated it self to after-times. For the cure or prevention of which, no-

To the Reader.

thing is so necessary to be believed and preserved perpetually in mind, as that Counsel which the same great Doctour gives in another place *. Βέλει θεόλογον γινώσκειν, &c. *Wouldst thou be a Divine, and worthy of God? Τὰς ἐντολάς φύλασσε, Keep the Commandments: Go in the way of God's precepts. Practice is the best step thou canst take to contemplation. Which is the surest advice for all Christians to follow: who must not think by any other means to arrive at that blisfull sight of God; in which our knowledge of him will be perfected in the other World.*

* Orat.
cxix.
p. 493.

Of which *Beatificall Vision* I have not adventured to say much in the ensuing Treatise, because *our manner of living* (as *Saint Augustine* * speaks in an Epistle of his upon this very subject) *is of more consideration in this inquiry, then our manner of speaking.* Nam qui didicerunt à Domino Jesu mites esse & humiles corde, plùs cogitando & orando proficiunt, quàm legendo & audiendo. *For they that have learned of the Lord Jesus to be lowly and humble in heart, profit more by meditation and prayer, then they can by reading and hearing.* But something I have said, as far as I could find any directions in the Holy

* Epist.
cxii. ad
Paulinam.

To the Reader.

Holy Scriptures : which warrant us to conclude, that the participation we have of God now, shall be so improved in the other World, that whatsoever we enjoy of him here, we shall in a higher and after a more perfect manner, with the addition of immortality, enjoy when we rise from the dead. We are now *the Sons of God* by faith in *Christ Jesus* ; who bids us be confident of it, and rejoyce in it : And yet he mentions this as a speciall privilege belonging to us after the resurrection ; when we shall *not marry nor die any more*, but be *equall to the Angels*, and be *ἱοὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ the Sons of God, being the children of the Resurrection.* xx. *Luk.* 35, 36. Just as it was with our Lord *Christ* himself, who was in a more speciall and excellent manner called the Son of God, after his rising from the dead ; when God said to him, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee* : (advanced him, that is, to a more excellent degree of likeness to him in power and dominion, putting all things under his feet :) So it shall be with all those Sons whom he brings unto glory. They shall be more nearly related to God, at the Resurrection, and resemble him more exactly ; whose Image they now bear in Wisdom and Goodness. But

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how much he will then impart of himself to us, the Apostles themselves were not able to inform us. *We are now the Sons of God, saith Saint John 1 Ep. iii. 2. but it doth not yet appear & is to be desired, how we shall be the Sons of God, in the other world.* We now find (I may adde by a parity of reason) a great pleasure in holy thoughts ; we feel the joys of ardent love ; are ravish't with the melody of Songs of praise, and with the sweet violence of a glance of light from heaven upon us ; and we are sure we shall be so happy as to have a great increase of this pleasure, when we remove from hence : But it doth not appear how we shall think ; nor what will be the satisfaction of heavenly Love ; nor what new Songs shall be put into our mouths ; nor how God will look in upon us, when we shall see him as he is. We must be content to know, that all these will bear a proportion to the infinite Goodness of Him who is Omnipotent, and hath loved us so much as to purchase us with a great price, and to give his Holy Spirit to us ; and according to the Love of him that died for us, and is gone to prepare a place for us, that where he is, there we may be also.

In

To the Reader.

In this hope we may now *rejoyce* (though we do not at present see our Lord) *with joy unspeakable and full of glory*. For I have proved, by undeniable arguments, that God the Father hath given power to his Son *Jesus*, to make us more happy then we can now conceive; and that He will undoubtedly bring us to live with himself. What greater Good can we desire then this? Or what greater Motive can be thought of, to persuade us sincerely to embrace the Christian Religion; whose business it is, (as *Lactantius* concludes his Book of a *Blessed Life*,) to direct us to the Eternall Rewards of the heavenly Treasure? “Of
“ which that we may be capable, we
“ must presently disengage our selves
“ from the insnaring pleasures of this
“ Life; which deceive mens Souls by
“ their pernicious sweetness. And how
“ great a felicity ought we to esteem it,
“ to go, being delivered from the impu-
“ rities of this Earth, to that most equall
“ Judge, and most indulgent Father;
“ who for our labours will give us rest,
“ for death life, for darkness light, for
“ earthly short goods, those that are ce-
“ lestiall and eternall? None of the

To the Reader.

“sharpnesses and miseries which we en-
“dure here, while we are employed in
“the works of righteousness, are in any
“manner to be compared with that re-
“ward. Therefore if we will be wise,
“if we will be happy, let us propose
“the worst things, that can be, to our
“selves, and resolve to suffer them : since
“it is manifest, that this frail Pleasure
“we have here shall not be without
“punishment ; nor Vertue without a
“divine reward. All mankind ought
“to endeavour, with all speed, to di-
“rect themselves into the right way ;
“that, having undertaken and perfor-
“med the duties of a vertuous life, and
“patiently endured its labours, they
“may be worthy to have God for their
“Comforter. For our Father and Lord,
“who made and settled the Heaven,
“who brought the Sun and the rest of
“the Stars into it, and out of Nothing
“raised the rest of the World to this per-
“fection wherein we see it, beholding
“the Errours of mankind, sent a Leader,
“who should lay before us the way of
“righteousness. Him let us all follow :
“Him let us hear : Him let us most de-
“voutly obey. For He alone hath pur-
“ged mens hearts by his truth, and set
“due

UMI

To the Reader.

“ due bounds to their desires and fears ;
“ shewing them the chiefeſt Good, to
“ which they ſhould tend, and the way
“ whereby it may be attained. Nor
“ hath He onely ſhewn it, but he hath
“ gone before us in it ; leſt any ſhould
“ ſhun the courſe of Vertue, becauſe of
“ the difficulty that attends it. Let the
“ way of perdition and deceit therefore
“ be forſaken ; in which death lies con-
“ cealed under the inticements of plea-
“ ſure. And the nearer any man, by
“ reaſon of his years, ſees that day ap-
“ proaching in which he muſt depart this
“ life, let him caſt in his mind the more
“ ſeriously, how he may go away as pure
“ as may be ; how he may come inno-
“ cent to his Judge ; and not, as thoſe
“ whoſe minds are blinded, how he may
“ ſatiſfie his luſts more greedily before he
“ go. Let every man deliver himſelf out
“ of that gulph, while he may, while he
“ hath ſome power ; and convert to God
“ with his whole Soul : that he may ſe-
“ curely expect that day, in which God,
“ the Lord and Governour of the World,
“ will judge every man's works and
“ thoughts. Let him not onely neglect,
“ but fly from, thoſe things of which
“ men are now ſo greedy. Let him look
upon

To the Reader.

“ upon his Soul as better then these fal-
“ lacious goods, whose possession is un-
“ certain and fading. For they go away
“ continually, more swiftly then they
“ come : and if we could enjoy them to
“ the last, they must be left to others.
“ We can carry nothing away, but a life
“ piously and innocently led. He shall
“ come rich and wealthy to God, whom
“ Continence, Mercy, Patience, Charity
“ and Faith shall wait upon. This is
“ our Inheritance, which can neither be
“ taken from any man, nor transferred
“ to another. And whosoever is desirous
“ of it, may have it if he please. But
“ let no man trust in Riches, nor in Dig-
“ nity, nor in Kingly Power : these do
“ not make us immortall. Let us give
“ our mind to Righteousness, which a-
“ lone will be our inseparable Compa-
“ nion, till it bring us to God. As long
“ as we live, let us continue our warfare
“ unweariedly ; let us keep our watch ;
“ let us valiantly encounter with the
“ enemy : that being conquerours, and
“ triumphing over the vanquisht adver-
“ sary, we may receive from our Lord
“ the reward of Vertue, which he hath
“ promised.

There

To the Reader.

There is the greatest reason, I have demonstrated, to expect it with such a lively Faith as was in the first Christians, (in whose words I have chosen to deliver these things, rather than mine own,) who confidently looked Death in the face, in whatsoever shape it appeared; and were not in the least daunted at the sight of it. There were innumerable experiments made of it, not onely in Men, but in Women and Children; as the great *Athanasius* * justly glories. Who takes this to be “no small token
“of the abolishing death, (so that it had
“no power, but was indeed dead it self,)
“that it was contemned by all the Disciples of *Christ*. Before whose Divine
“appearing, *ποβερός ὡς καὶ αὐτοῖς τοῖς ἁγίοις*, it was dreadfull to the Saints
“themselves, who bewailed and lamented those that died, as if they were
“lost. But since our Saviour rose from
“the dead, it is no longer terrible; but
“all that believe on him tread it under
“foot, as if it were nothing; and chuse
“rather to die, than deny the Faith of
“*Christ*. For they know certainly that
“the dead do not perish; but that they
“both live, and shall also be made incorrup-

* Περὶ
ἐνανθίστα-
σεως
τῆς Λό-
γου, &c.
p. 80, &c.

To the Reader.

“ corruptible by the Resurrection. That
“ Evill one, the Devill, who heretofore
“ by death insulted over us, is himself
“ alone now left truly dead. Of which
“ this is a sign, that, whereas before
“ men believed on *Christ*, they lookt on
“ Death as very formidable ; since they
“ embraced his Faith and Doctrine, they
“ do so much slight it, that they run
“ chearfully to it, and become Witnes-
“ ses against him of our Saviour's Resur-
“ rection. Mere Children make nothing
“ of it. The weaker Sex, (so weak is
“ he that had the power of Death now
“ grown,) who were formerly deceived
“ by him, laugh him to scorn, as one that
“ is dead, and hath lost his power. Just
“ as a Tyrant, when a lawfull Prince
“ hath vanquisht him, and bound him
“ hand and foot, is despised, and made
“ a mocking-stock by all that pass by
“ him, who no longer fear his rage and
“ cruelty : even so is Death, being over-
“ come by our Saviour, trampled upon
“ by all his Disciples ; who bearing wit-
“ ness to their Master, deride it in those
“ words of the Apostle, *O Death, where*
“ *is thy Victory ? O grave, where is thy*
“ *sting ?* What conquests hast thou to
“ brag of now ? Behold, we are all
“ made

To the Reader.

“ made alive, through *Jesus Christ* our
“ Lord.

“ Mankind, it is certain, naturally ab-
“hors Death, and the dissolution of their
“ Body ; and therefore it is no small de-
“monstration of our Saviour's victory o-
“ ver it, that he hath so changed the na-
“ ture of man, as to perswade even chil-
“dren in *Christ*, and tender girls, to make
“ no account of this Life, and with joy
“ to think of Death. It may seem to some
“ an incredible thing, that Death should
“ thus have lost its power: but so it doth,
“ that there should be a cloath made of
“ an *Indian* stone, which fire cannot burn ;
“ or that a mighty Tyrant, notwithstan-
“ding all his forces, should on a sudden be
“ subdued, and held in chains, by no vi-
“ sible power. Let him that doubts of
“ either of these put on that cloath, or go
“ into the Dominions of the Conquerour ;
“ and he shall be satisfied of the weakness
“ of the fire, and of the Tyrant. In like
“ manner, if we meet with an Unbeliever,
“ who, after so many Wonders and so ma-
“ny Martyrs of *Jesus Christ*, makes a
“doubt whether Death be destroyed, and
“ a period put to his Kingdome ; we can-
“ not blame his admiration at so great a
“ thing:

To the Reader.

“ thing : provided he do not harden him-
“ self in infidelity, nor impudently op-
“ pose those things which are most evi-
“ dent. Let him, for his satisfaction, doe
“ as he that would know whether such a
“ Tyrant, as I now spoke of, be vanqui-
“ shed; go into the Conquerour's Coun-
“ try, submit himself, I mean, to Christian
“ instruction, and receive the Faith of
“ *Christ*; and then he shall soon see the
“ weakness of Death, and the victory that
“ is got over it. Πολλοὶ γὰρ ἀπιστοῦντες πρό-
“ τερον, καὶ χλευάζοντες, &c. For many
“ who were once not onely Unbelievers, but
“ Mockers, have afterwards believed; and
“ so contemned Death, that they have be-
“ come Martyrs for *Christ's* sake.

- I pray God these Treatises may have
the like happy effect upon some doubting
or unbelieving Soul, who shall vouchsafe
to examine the Evidence I have produced
for the Christian Faith. Against which
I beseech such persons not to shut their
eyes, nor harden their hearts in infidelity.
If they will condescend so far, as to con-
sider what we say; they may, of Scoffers,
become such zealous Assertours of the
power and glory of the Lord *Jesus*, as to
be willing and ready (though there will
be

To the Reader.

be no occasion, I hope, to try their resolution) to testify their love to him, and hope in him, with the loss of their lives. And as long as they live, they will find it the highest of all pleasures, to think that they shall never die. Of which happiness we can by no means be so well secured, as by the Christian Religion. All the Philosophers of greatest fame (as *Ensebins* * observes) talkt like Children about the Immortality of the Soul, in comparison with Christians. Among whom, saith he, boys and girls, and those Barbarians too, and the most despicable people, declare this truth *ἔργοις πρότερον ἢ ῥήμασι*, not so much by their discourses as by their deeds, which they perform by the power and cooperation of our Saviour. The Discourses of *Aristotle* about this matter are justly said by Saint *Greg. Nazianzen* * to be *Συμτὰς* *περὶ ψυχῆς λόγος* because, as *Jacobus Billius* hath demonstrated, he thought the Souls of men to be mortall. And accordingly *Theodoret* ranks him, in this regard, with *Democritus* and *Epicurus*, who boldly said they were corruptible. So little force was there, as he also observes *, in the many discourses of the most wise *Plato*, to prove the Soul's Immortality; which could not make his greatest Scholar in love

* Lib. I.
Prepar.
Evang.
c. 4.

* Orat.
xxxiii.
p. 535.

* Lib. v.
Therapen-
tices, p.
546. 556.

UM

To the Reader.

love with his Opinion. "Whereas our
"Fishermen, and Publicans, and Shoe-
"makers, perswaded both *Greeks*, and
"Romans; and *Egyptians*, and all other
"Nations of mankind, to believe it. And
"you shall see, saith he, not onely the
"Doctours of the Church, but Smiths
"and Weavers, and other Artizans, both
"men and women, that understand these
"things. And not onely such people as
"live in cities, but poor country-men are
"so well instructed, that one may find a
"Ditcher or a Neatherd discoursing of
"the Holy Trinity, of the Creation of
"the World; and that knows more of
"humane Nature then either *Aristotle* or
"Plato.

For *Plato* himself was not constant in
his Opinions about the state of the Soul
after it departed this body. But some-
times speaks of great torments which the
wicked endure in dark prisons; and de-
scribes their punishments to be dreadfull,
by the sentence of impartiall Judges: and
otherwhere he talks as if those Souls were
at liberty to chuse what body they will
please to go into; and that it pleases them
better to be a Bird, or perhaps an Ass, then
formerly it did to be a Man. Which con-
trariety

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trariety of opinion is observed, and handsomely represented, by *Eusebius* *, whose words I shall not transcribe. For we find the Philosophers talking so discontentedly concerning the present state of mankind, who are subject, they say, to more calamities, and therefore in a worse condition, then any other Creature upon the face of the earth; that it is sufficient to convince us how little certainty they had of a future state. The stedfast belief of which being taught, as *Theodoret* observes, with one mouth, and without any disagreement or doubting, by all the Apostles and Followers of *Christ*, made all Christian people not onely contented with their portion, though more calamitous in those days then any other mens; but also chearfull under the sorest burthens that oppressed them.

* *Lib. xiii.
Præpar.
c. 16.*

And though the ancient *Hebrews* were taught by holy men of God to know better then the Philosophers; and God in his infinite goodness was pleased, when they were in danger of grievous troubles for Religion sake, then to give them still more and more hope of another life; (as *Grotius* wisely observes, both upon the story of *Elijah's* calling the Soul of the

b

Widow's

To the Reader.

Widow's Son back again, 1 *King*. xvii. 21. and upon the dead man's rising again, when he touched the bones of *Elisha*, 2 *King*. xiii. 21. and may be farther verified from the story of the *Maccabees*:) yet it must be acknowledged, there was no particular promise made to them of *Eternall Life*, either before the giving of the Law, or in that Covenant made with them by *Moses*; nor any clear and expresse promise in after-times, untill the coming of our Lord *Christ*. Who hath made a New Covenant with us, which is *established upon better promises* then those in the Old, as the holy Writer to the *Hebrews* speaks, viii. 6. For the promises of the Covenant made with them by *Moses* were onely, that they should possess the land of *Canaan*, and lead a happy life there, while they observed his Precepts: But the promises of the Gospell are, that, by obedience to our Lord, we shall come to live eternally with him in the heavens. So the Church of *Christ* hath always understood it, as any one may be satisfied who can read the

Cap. xxiii. Answer of *Ger. Vossius* to *Ravensbergerus*. Where he shews, that the ancient Doctors, especially Saint *Augustine*, lookt upon the Old Testament as containing properly and directly the promises onely of

To the Reader.

of earthly and temporall things; which were the Figures of those that are celestiall and eternall. The words of Saint Augustine are very memorable to this purpose, in a little Book of his, wherein he answers to five Questions put to him by Honoratus: to which he adds another of his own, concerning the Grace of the New Testament; in which that Grace is revealed, which was hid in the Old. God willing to shew, saith he, that even earthly and temporall felicity is his gift, and ought not to be expected but from him alone, thought fit long ago to dispense the Old Testament, which belongs to the Old man; from whom this life must needs begin. But those felicities of the Fathers are proclaimed to be granted by the bounty of God, though belonging to this transitory life. For those earthly gifts were the things that were openly and apparently promised and given. Covertly indeed the New Testament was figuratively foretold in all those things, and was understood by a few, whom the same Grace was pleased to honour with the gift of prophecy.

Epist. cxx.
cap. 2, 3.

By which gift, bestowed not upon a few persons in one Nation, but, as their Prophets foretold, upon all flesh, these

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things, which were then lockt up in secret, are now laid open to the view of all : and so plainly revealed, that we reade of ETERNALL LIFE oftner in the New Testament, then they did of health, and riches, and victory, and long life, in the Old. Blessed be the tender mercy of our God, should all those that have any faith say, who hath *called us into his marvellous light* : whereby we see such things, as eye never saw ; and see them so clearly, that we cannot reasonably doubt of them. We enjoy the body of that, whereof they had but the shadow. We have that in substance, which they had but in picture. The promise of that is ours, which they had onely in the type. We have the proof, the evidence, the demonstration of that, which was onely represented to them in mysticall figures. So far are we illuminated beyond those great Souls, who were the glory of their times, that we understand the meaning of their own Books, and the signification of all the types and shadows, wherein these heavenly things were wrapt up and hidden, better then they could do themselves. For our Lord is risen from the dead, and hath opened the Kingdom of heaven ; and, tearing
the

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the veil in pieces, hath set before our eyes the holy place not made with hands, eternall in the heavens. Into which he is entred as our Fore-runner, to prepare a place for us ; and from thence hath sent a more abundant measure of the Holy Ghost, to enlighten the eyes of our understanding ; that we may know what the hope of Christianity is, and how exceeding glorious that celestially inheritance, which he intends to divide among us. i. *Eph.* 17, 18.

But it is not sufficient to admire this grace, (I have demonstrated,) we must carefully improve it ; or else it will be worse with us then if we had never known it. For if the Word spoken by Angels was so punctually verified, that every breach of it was duly punished : (as it is ii. *Hebr.* 2, 3, 4.) there is no hope that we should escape the severest effects of God's displeasure, if we neglect so great Salvation as this ; which ἀρχὴν λαβὼσα λαλεῖσθαι, being first published to the world by our Lord *Jesus*, was farther confirmed by the coming down of the Holy Ghost upon his Apostles. We are the disciples of Him, who spake as never man spake. Whose word of Salvation (as
b 3 his

To the Reader.

his Gospell is called) we then *neglect*, when we mind not what he saith ; or do not often think of it ; or, having thought of it, prefer every trifle before it, and will not be moved by such a wonderfull grace to obey his precepts. For by the opposition wherein this stands to the *transgression* and *disobedience* mentioned before against *Moses* his Law, we are sufficiently informed wherein this *neglect* principally consists : *viz.* in the transgressing those bounds our Lord hath set us ; and disobeying those commands, to the observance of which he incites us by the promise of immortall Life.

It is a fearfull thing to think how miserable they will be, who prove thus inconsiderate ; and in how great danger Christians are to be so, by the means of that very deceit which plunged the *Jews* into so many calamities. Because God had manifested more of his love to them, then to other Nations ; had given them an excellent Law, spoken to them by his Prophets, instructed them how to offer Sacrifice, and appointed a place where he would dwell among them ; they blessed themselves in the outward enjoyment of these singular priviledges ; they bragged

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ged that they were the seed of *Abraham*, and that they had the Oracles of God, and were a people separated to him from the rest of the world by many holy rites: but they took no care to be obedient to his Laws; and less regarded to be indued with the spirit of faithfull *Abraham*, who left all those earthly goods, in which they placed their chief treasure, for God's sake. Just thus men suffer themselves to be deluded at this day. Because God hath granted us the preeminence even above the *Jews* themselves; hath brought us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, made us the Children of Light, and let us see such things as many Kings and Prophets desired to see, but did not see them; they content themselves with the bare profession of this Religion, and think it enough to be called by such an honourable Name, as that of *Christ*: on whom they rest and rely as the *Jews* did on their Sacrifices; never thinking of being indued with his blessed Nature and Spirit, and offering their Wills intirely to God, as he did. Thus men perish, even in the midst of so great light and means of being saved. And there is no help for them, unless they will grow serious, and consider the design of the Christian Faith.

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Which will teach them, after a very few thoughts about it, that our Lord Jesus is the author of eternall Salvation to those onely that obey him; (v. Heb. 9.) and will be so far from protecting others from destruction, that he himself will be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Theff. i. 7, 8.

I end this Preface as St. Augustine begins his third Chapter of his first Book of the Trinity, with the alteration of one word onely in the conclusion. *Whosoever reads this Book, where he is convinced, let him go along with me: where he sticks, let him enquire with me: where he sees his own error, let him return to me; where mine, let him call me back to him. Thus we shall all walk together in the way of charity; tending to him, of whom it is said, Seek ye his face alway. Whosoever therefore, when he reads, saith, This is not well said, for I do not understand it; let him reprehend my speech, but not my faith. It might, it is likely, have been spoken more plainly: but there is no man ever spoke so, as in all things to please all.*



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E R R A T A.

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IMPRIMATUR.

*Guil. Sill, R. P. D. Hen.
Episcopo Lond. à Sacris
Domesticis.*

Oct. 21.

1676.

I S. Joh. V. 11.

AND THIS IS THE
RECORD, THAT
GOD HATH GI-
VEN TO US E-
TERNALL LIFE:
AND THIS LIFE
IS IN HIS SON.

A N
INTRODUCTION

To the following

Discourse.

HAVING made, in the former Treatise, as diligent a search as I could into the Records of Heaven and Earth, and found there the clearest Evidences that Jesus is the Son of God, (to whom therefore we owe the most humble and chearful Obedience ;) I purpose now to make a farther inquiry into them, after the Royal Powers which belong to so great a Prince, who both in his Nature and in his Office so infinitely excells all other, that his loyal Subjects may well expect from him the greatest grace and favour. He was God appearing as Man, (to use the words of Ignatius,) and Man working mightily as God ; but yet submitted himself to the meanest condition, and the basest death,

Epist. ad
Ephes.

B

for

An Introduction to

for the purging away our sins by his blood: whereby he obtained, as the most ample Dominion over all creatures, so the largest Power, both to remit sins, and also to reward the services of all those that believe on him. To whom his affection is so great, and extends it self in such boundless love, that his kindness towards them will not be perfected, I shall prove, till he hath bestowed on them ETERNAL LIFE.

A Blessing for which all mankind most passionately wish: not onely because the weakness of our bodies, the inconstancy of all their enjoyments, the troubles we meet with in the world, and the necessity of dying, make it most desirable; but because it comes recommended to us by its own proper worth and excellence; which is so exceeding great, that it renders the most constant untroubled possession of this world's goods, and a perpetuity in this life (could it be obtained) without any sickness or infirmity, a vile and contemptible purchase in comparison with it. This therefore all considerate minds would gladly be well assured of. There is nothing of such importance to their satisfaction, as a certainty of immortal happiness, when they leave this Body. Which will make our Obedience

the following Discourse.

ence to God's commands as steadfast as our Belief is; and withall most sweet and easie, whatsoever opposition we have to discourage us. For the hope of Eternal Life is able to lift us up above all the temptations wherewith the world can assault us: be they either the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life; or be they those hatreds, reproaches, persecutions, loss of goods, yea and death it self, which we may be in danger of for Piety's sake.

Now looking a little farther into this Holy Writer, who hath preserved the unquestionable Records concerning these matters; I find there is as great a certainty of this Eternal Life by Jesus Christ, as there is of his being the Son of God; and that the very same Witnesses who so fully declare the one, give no less strong Evidence for the proof of the other. For THIS (says He, 1 John v. 11.) IS THE RECORD, (or WITNESSE,) THAT GOD HATH GIVEN TO US ETERNAL LIFE: AND THIS LIFE IS IN HIS SON. Which words, being a continuation of the foregoing Discourse, carry this sense in them; There is great reason you should receive the Witness of God, (viz. of the Father, Word, and

An Introduction, &c.

Holy Ghost, and of the Water, Blood, and Spirit,) not onely because it is greater then the Witness of men, which you cannot justly reject ; (v. 9.) and because, if you do reject it, you make God a Liar, which who can have the heart to do ? (v. 10.) but also because the thing which is testified to us by these Witnesses, when they say that Jesus is the Son of God, is of all other the most desirable ; viz. that God designs for us no less blessing then Eternal Life, which the Lord Jesus hath in his hands to keep for us, and to bestow upon us.

The ensuing Discourse then will necessarily fall into these two Parts. First, to shew what this Eternal Life is ; and secondly, to prove the Certainty of it, from the mouth of all those Witnesses. Of the first of which I must treat with the greater brevity, because it is not the Design of the Apostle in this place, to give us an account what the Eternal Life is, which God hath promised ; but to shew that he hath given us an undoubted right to it, and that it is in the power of that Great Lord, whose Servants we are by Faith in him, to dispose of it.

THE

(I)

THE
WITNESSES
TO
Christianity.

PART II.

CHAP. I.

Of *ETERNAL LIFE*
in generall.

AND now I launch out, when I go about to speak of *Eternal Life*, into a wide Sea ; of which it is but little that our eye can descry, or our thoughts fathom, and less that I must confine my self unto, in this present Discourse. There is more contained in these two words, *ETERNALL LIFE*, then all the world can discover ; though

we have so good a Compass as the Book of God, whereby to steer our course, and to guide and assist us in our Inquiry. We may venture, as far as ever our thoughts will carry us, into this depth; but we shall still see something beyond all that we can conceive, and be enabled by our search to discern more fully, that it hath no bottom, no bounds nor limits: as will appear, if you do but attend to this general Description of it out of the Holy Writings. In whose style it is most certain it signifieth, *a full and constant enjoyment of all the happiness that our Being is capable to receive.* I say Happiness, because as **DEATH** in the Sacred language denotes all manner of Misery, affliction and trouble; so by **LIFE** it expresses all kind of Felicity, pleasure and contentment. And I say *full and constant* happiness, because the word **ETERNALL** must needs adde something to the other; and that is compleariness, firmness and solidity. As *Death*, if it be not *eternall*, leaves some room for thoughts of happiness: so *Life*, if it want that addition, doth not exclude all vexation and sadness. But then, on the contrary, both the one and the other, if this be annexed, are made perfect;

perfect; without any hope of happiness in that *Death*, or any fear of misery in this *Life*.

To clear our passage, I judge it necessary to spend a few words in making good this Notion of *Life* and *Death*, by producing some places of Holy Writ, where they are so used. And first, for *DEATH*, the very first time we meet with it in God's Book, it is used to express all the Misery that man drew upon himself by his Sin. ii. *Gen.* 17. *In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*; i. e. fall into a most calamitous estate, (as it is explained iii. *Gen.* 16, 17, 18, 19.) till worn out with labour, sorrow and pain, he returned to the dust out of which he was taken. Thus when the Locusts came upon the land of *Egypt*, and destroyed every green thing, *Pharaoh* intreats *Moses* (x. *Exod.* 17.) to pray to the Lord that he would take away *this Death onely*. Which shews, that all the plagues and disasters which fell upon that land, went under this general name of *DEATH*; though now it be restrained to the last and greatest of all punishments. The like you read in the second Book of the *Kings*, (iv. 40.)

where the sons of the Prophets, as they were eating of their pottage, cry out, *O man of God, there is DEATH in the pot*; something that is very distastfull to the palate, and perhaps hurtfull and poisonous to the body, which made them they could not eat it. In the New Testament also (penned by men of the same country) we find the very same language; St. Paul saying that he was in *Deaths often*, (2 Cor. xi. 23.) and that he *died daily*, (1 Cor. xv. 31.) and wishing to be delivered from the *body of this Death*; (vii. Rom. 24.) i. e. of such misery, that it made him sigh and groan forely under the burthen of it. And to name no more, the *Shadow of Death* in these Books signifies nothing else but an horrible, dangerous place; or a dismall forlorn condition, into which any miserable person is falln.

This being the notion then of the word D E A T H in the speech of the *Hebrews*, such must be the signification of the word L I F E which is opposite to it; whereby they express all Felicity and comfortable enjoyments. Thus when *David* says, his enemies were *lively* or *living*, (as it is in the *Hebrew* text,

xxxviii. *Psal.* 19.) he means, they were in a flourishing prosperous condition, abounding with all worldly goods; while he was abandoned to contempt, poverty, and continual danger. And when he says, *their heart shall live that seek God*, (lxi. *Psal.* 32.) his meaning is, they shall enjoy true peace and contentment. So when the people say, (2 *King.* xi. 12.) *Let the King live*, which we render, *God save the King*, they wish him a prosperous and happy reign. And when *David* acknowledges God to be the *fountain of life*, (xxxvi. *Psal.* 9.) it is as much as to say, an ever-running spring of all felicity, from whom flows, as the foregoing words are, *a river of pleasures*. Hence they are bid to keep to God's Commandments *as their life*, (xxxii. *Deut.* 47.) And this is said to be the excellency of knowledge, *that wisdom giveth LIFE to them that have it*, (vii. *Eccles.* 12.) because by observing those wise precepts, they were put into a most happy condition; which could not be had by any other means, but would certainly be lost by turning from those holy paths. This is a phrase so known, and the translation of the word to this use (saith * *Maimonides*) is so frequent, that all good and wholesome

* *More
Nev. par. I.
c. 42.*

whollsome Doctrine is called *Chajah*, that is, *L I F E*: and thence our Masters say, *The just are called L I V I N G even in their death, and the wicked are called D E A D even while they are alive*; because the one were happy, and the other miserable, in those contrary conditions.

The true reason of which dialect or manner of speech I take to be this: that *L I F E* being the foundation upon which all felicity is built, the root out of which it grows, (it being impossible to enjoy any thing unless we be alive,) and it abiding and continuing also, when the pleasures and other circumstances of life are often interrupted; it was thought the aptest thing to express that felicity which we partake of in life, yea the fullest felicity, the fruition of the compleatest Good, when life shall be made eternal. And if this be not sufficient to demonstrate that the Holy Writers intend by *Eternal Life*, all the good we are or shall be capable to enjoy; you may farther observe, that they describe it by all things that are excellent and desirable, having borrowed from the glory of the whole World whatsoever is lovely and illustrious, to help to represent
it

it to us. Shall I put together the severall lines whereby it is described in as handsome an order and composure as I can ; and so leave every one to judge of the rare beauty of this *Life* , when it shall have all its fillings up , which in its ruder draught appears so amiable in our eyes ?

This *L I F E* then , that it may be understood to be the enjoyment of a fuller good then we can conceive, a good beyond the bold desires of the most enlarged and luxurious appetite , is expressed by the hugest heaps of *Treasures* ; (such as the Heavens onely are great enough to contain ;) by the possession of an *immortall Inheritance* reserved there for us ; and by *Pearls* and *Jewels* of a price so invaluable, that he is stupid who sells not all he hath , if they are not to be had at a lower rate, to make a purchase of them. These expressions and the rest that follow are so well known, that I need not stay to set down the particular places of Holy Scripture where they may be found ; but proceed to tell you , that this *Life* is there also set forth, by feeding upon the delight of the most exquisite *pleasures*, and being entertained
with-

without any satiety, and in the most noble company, at the most sumptuous Feast: by exaltation withall to the sublimest pitch of Honour; such as the power of Kings, the majesty of Thrones, and the glory of Crowns; which Holy men call in to their assistance, that they may serve to lift up our minds to conceive the height of this happy Life, and make it seem the more royal and magnificent.

To which you may adde, that they make use of the names of *Rest*, and *Refreshment*, and *Peace*, and *Joy* or *Contentment*. For as we reade of *entring into Life*; so we do of *entring into Rest*, and *into the Joy of our Lord*, and *dwelling in Peace*: because these are the onely things on earth which can compleat and perfect the happiness of those who enjoy Princely dignity and power.

But then, when the Earth can afford no more colours for the drawing a picture of this most excellent Life, or supreme Felicity, those Holy men ascend up to Heaven, and fetch from thence, not onely some rays of light, but the very Sun it self, and that in the top of its glory, to illustrate by its brightness the incomparable

parable beauty of it. For it is called the *Inheritance of the Saints in light*; and our Blessed Lord is called the *Light of the world*; who promises the Just, that they shall have the *Light of life*, and *shine like the Sun in the Kingdom of the Father*.

But, alas! it is not in the power of such words as these to express its excellence. And therefore, when all things that fall under our eyes and our taste are spent in the description of it, we read then of melodious *Songs and Thanksgivings*, and the joyfull voice of those who triumph continually. Nay, the whole World, as big as it is, is introduced as a small resemblance of this Happiness; wherein victorious Souls are said to *inherit all things*, and to be made *equal to the Angels*; who joyn in consort with them, and bear their part in those heavenly Anthems and Hymns, wherewith they bless and praise the Great Lord of all.

But if all the goodly things that are or ever have been in the whole world should meet together, and falling down at the feet of one man, should, with a
joynt

joynt consent, conspire to make him happy, they could never advance him near the height of this celestial Bliss, whose incomparable excellence cannot be expressed, without the assistance of words called down from the highest Heavens, the place of God's Habitation. And therefore nothing below *the Kingdom of Heaven, a Mansion in our heavenly Father's House, a Building of God in the Heavens*, is made the portion of such happy Souls. And as if the Heavens, yea the Heaven of Heavens, could afford nothing great enough to represent this Blessedness; Holy men lead us, at last, to God himself; whom they bid us behold in the High and Holy place, as in his Chamber of Presence. And this LIFE is called *Seeing G O D*, and *beholding his Glory*, and *being with our L O R D*: which are names of such transcendent greatness, that we had need enjoy this Happiness, to understand them.

But thus the Men of God, from things sensible, lead us by the hand to those that are spirituall and invisible. And now that they have placed our thoughts in the presence of God, there they leave them

them to take as full a view as they can of him, and to spread themselves in the largest contemplations of his Perfections. For they were not able to go any farther, then onely to tell us, that we shall be *made like to him*, whose Perfections shine so gloriously in our eyes. This is the highest pitch to which they carry our meditations. Here they bid us rest our thoughts; and now that they have advanced them above the Earth and Heavens, to consider with our selves what it is to *See God*, till we resemble him, and be perfectly transform'd into his most blessed Nature and Life. All they can doe more for us, is onely to tell us what *GOD* is, the enjoyment of whom is our Happiness: and who, we are to understand, will be infinitely far more to our whole man, then Kingdoms and Thrones, then Crowns and Jewels, then Feasts and Songs, then the Sun it self and all the sweet influences of Heaven, with the rest of the things forementioned, could be, were they all united in one design to make us happy.

The wisest of the *Jews*, as blind as that Nation is, are sensible of this; how disproportionable all the words, which
even

Cap. viii.
de Peni-
tent.

even divinely-inspired persons use, are to the Nobleness of this Life. In which, saith *Maimonides*, "there is no room for meat and drink and such like pleasures; but the just sit with Crowns on their heads, and delight themselves in the Splendour of the Divine Majesty-- There are many names whereby this Life is called (*Derech Mashal*) after the figurative way of speaking in the Holy Books. For example, the Mountain of the Lord; the place of his Holiness; the Courts of the Lord; the Beauty or Sweetness of the Lord; the Tabernacle of God; the House of God; his holy Temple; the Gate of the Lord. And after the same way of similitude and figurative speech, Wise men call this Good prepared for the Just, by the name of a Banquet or Feast; and most commonly, the World to come. Let not this Good seem light to thee, nor do thou imagine the reward of Piety to be so little, as to drink the richest wines, to eat the best victuals, to have the most beautifull wives, to be clothed in silk and scarlet, to dwell in ivory palaces, and to have all the furniture of gold and silver and such like things. But understand that there is

" no

"no Good in this world to which that
 "supremie Good can be compared, but
 "onely by way of figure and similitude.
 "In truth, there is no proportion be-
 "tween the Good of the Soul in the o-
 "ther World, and the Goods of the Bo-
 "dy, such as meat and drink, in this.
 "But that Great Good is incomprehen-
 "sible and incomparable; according to
 "those words of *David*, xxxi. *Psal.* 19.
 "O how great good hast thou laid up for
 "those that fear thee! He could not tell
 "how great: but with what desire did he
 "long after the life of that world, when
 "he said, xxvii. *Psal.* 13. *I believe to see*
 "the goodness of the Lord in the land of
 "the living? That's another name where-
 "by they called this place of Bliss. For
 "wheresoever their ancient Wise men
 "(saith their Mysticall exposition of the
 "Psalms) meet with this phrase in Scri-
 "pture, *the land of the living*, they ex-
 "pound it of Paradise, because *that is the*
country where men live for ever.

Manasseh
 Ben Isr.
 Probl. xvii.
 de Creati-
 one.

But there are no words like those of
 our Blessed Lord to represent this sur-
 passing Happiness of the pure in heart,
 who he promises shall SEE GOD.
 Let us therefore here fix our minds, and
 stay

stay a while; before we pass on any farther, to search into the meaning of this phrase, which is the sublimest and most comprehensive of all other, whereby this **ETER NALL LIFE** is described to us.

And the least that can be meant by it is, that we shall be there where He hath His most special residence, and shall dwell in His House in the Heavens, where there are so many Mansions. There the Angels are said to stand before God, to behold the face of our heavenly Father: And therefore for us to see **G O D**, or behold him, must in generall denote, that we shall be more like Angels then Men; and being admitted into the society of those heavenly Ministers, shall take up our habitation in the same place where they wait upon the Divine Majesty. Whence it is, that as the Angels are called the *Sons of God*, (i. Job 6. ii. 1.) To are all those who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that World, and the Resurrection of the Dead, xx. Luk. 35. We are now the *Sons of G O D*, saith St. John, 1. Epist. iii. 1, 2. in a state, that is,

of great favour with him; and therefore need not care if *the world hate us*: But we have far greater things in hope, and look for a more excellent relation to him; it *not appearing yet what we shall be*. The meaning of which last words, in all probability, is this; that the manner wherein we shall be the *Sons of God* in the other world, is not now manifest. There is no body knows how near we shall be to him, when we shall be *the Children of God, being the children of the Resurrection*; as our Saviour speaks in the place before mentioned. Onely this is certain, as I said just now, that we shall be Companions of Angels, and such *Sons of God* as they are: And withall St. John here tells us that, *when He (or it) shall appear, we shall be like him*; it being naturall, that the Child should bear some resemblance to its Father.

II.

Now from hence it follows, that to SEE GOD is to enjoy such favours as He will be pleased to impart unto us in that high and holy place where he dwells: yea, to have some participation with him in his Blessedness, who is most

Blessed for evermore. For to *See*, in the language of the *Hebrews*, is to *enjoy*, when it is applied to a thing desirable ; or to be in that state, when it is applied to that which is hurtfull. Thus to *see good*, xxxiv. *Psal.* 12. is to possess it, and to lead an happy life ; and to *see the good of Jerusalem*, cxxviii. 5. is to partake of its peace and prosperity ; and to *see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living*, xxvii. *Psalm* 13. is in its first sense, to be delivered by God, and to enjoy the sweet fruits of it before he died. Nor is there any other meaning of *seeing life*, and *seeing the kingdom of God*, but this, that the parties to whom those promises are made shall be put into the possession of such blessings. And, on the other side, to *see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds*, xxvi. *Matth.* 64. is to feel his heavy wrath, the stroke of his revengefull hand upon their nation ; as may be gathered from i. *Revel.* 7. And to *see death*, lxxxix. *Psal.* 48. ii. *Luk.* 26. is no more then to die. This is so plain, that those things that belong to other senses yet are said to be *seen* ; which can signifie nothing else, but that they are perceived or enjoyed. O generation,
(saith

(saith *Jeremiah* ii. 31.) *see ye the word of the Lord*; that is, hear it, mind and consider it: or, as *Maimonides* expounds it *, *the intention of the Prophet is, that they should apprehend the sense of God's word.* * More Nev. par. 1. c. 46.

And that likewise which is said to be *seen* in one place, is said to be *tasted* in another; as to *see death*, viii. *Job*. 51. is the same with *tasting of death*, ver. 52. Which is a demonstration, that to *See* in their language is frequently used for having a sense, perception or enjoyment of any object.

And therefore we cannot necessarily draw any more out of these words of our Saviour, which promise that we shall *see God*, but that we shall have as reall an enjoyment of him, and as sensibly perceive him, as we do now any good in this world; though the manner of it be not certainly known, as not so plainly deducible from these words. Let us conceive with our selves, as well as we can, what his infinite Perfections are, his Wisdom, his Goodness, his Power, his Purity, his Unchangeableness, his Immortality and Bliss; and then make account there will be a lively communication between us and all these, which will make

us partakers of his Happines. We shall not onely enjoy such good things as flow from his greatest favour and love; but in our measure, and according to such capacities as he will give us, be what He himself is. Those glorious Perfections of his will impart something of themselves to us: so that we shall be like God, and bear some similitude to him in Wisdom, Goodness, and Bliss. We shall be filled with Divine joys and pleasures, by being filled with a great sense of him, and a strong love to him, and a lively resemblance of his blessed Nature, immutably and immortally, without any change and without any end. Thus much we need not doubt is included in this phrase of *Seeing God*; but confidently believe, that good men shall enjoy all the effects of an holy Friendship with infinite Goodness, and receive such communications from his boundless Love, as shall make us really and substantially happy, like as he himself is.

III.

And I make no question likewise but hereby is signified an abundant Felicity which God from his own most blessed Nature

Nature will impart unto us; a very copious participation of Himself, which he will bestow upon us. For when *Job* says, xix. 26, 27. that *in his flesh he should SEE GOD*, and that *for himself, his own eyes beholding him, not another's*; his meaning seems to be, that before he died, he was sure God would deal exceeding bountifully with him; not onely rescuing him from his present miseries, but making him very happy: so that he should not onely leave his posterity, when he was gone, to enjoy the blessings which God had still in store for him; but be made in his own person partaker of them. Which prediction of his seems to have been fulfilled, when it is said, *the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before*, and that *he blessed his latter end more then his beginning*: xlii. 10, 12. Then he *saw God*, and that with his own eyes, when he was thus liberally blessed by him, and received such a large reward of his patience. In like manner, when our Lord saith, that pure upright men (like *Job*) shall *see God*, his meaning may be, that they shall in the highest degree partake of his bounteous Goodness, and receive as much from him above all their thoughts, as Sight is above all other senses.

And indeed the Sense of *Seeing* is so much more spacious and wide then the rest, that we may very well think an exceeding great happiness is onely able to fill up the whole meaning of this expression, of SEEING GOD. Which may be the better understood, perhaps, if we briefly consider the reasons for which the Sense of Seeing seems fitter then any other to set forth our participation with God in his supreme Felicity. They are such as these. (1.) It best agrees with those things whereby God is represented to us in the Holy Scriptures. Where we reade that *God is Light*, (which is the object of Sight onely,) *and in him is no darknesse at all*. As Light is a thing of which we are most sensible, and whereby we discern indeed all other visible things, but cannot comprehend what it is: such is God; of whom, if we attend, we cannot but be most apprehensive, and without whom we can enjoy nothing; though we cannot declare the inconceivable purity and excellency of his Nature. And (2.) Sight is the noblest Sense about us; the Eye being a work of more curious and exquisite contrivance then any other part of our body.

dy. And (3.) it is the most comprehensive Sense, which takes in a vast number of things at once; not onely of this lower world, but also of the upper. And it is a Sense (4.) that can longest enjoy the same object; for its object is not wasted and spent in the enjoyment, nor doth it vanish and die so soon as others are apt to do. And (5.) it is the principall Sense of discipline and learning, which conveys to us the first notices of things more abundantly then the rest; and especially helps us to the knowledg we obtain by making experimentall Observations. And (6.) it affords us the greatest certainty and evidence of the truth of things. Infomuch that we are wont to say, *We will believe it, when we see it*: and it is become a Rule in Law, that *One Eye-witness is better then an hundred Hear-say's*. And again (7.) it is a very affecting Sense, which raises passions sooner and quicker then any other. All the Rhetoricall praises in the world which are bestowed to commend a lovely object to us, will not move us so much as one glance of its beauty will. The Queen of *Sheba*, you remember, was led by report to come to the Court of *Solomon*; but when she
saw

saw the splendour wherein he lived, then it was, that *there was no more spirit in her.* And therefore (lastly) it brings in the greatest revenue of the purest and most long-liv'd pleasures, by presenting us with such a vast variety of objects, as other Senses, who have not so large a sphere and compass to move in, cannot entertain us withall.

From all which you may easily gather, that when our Lord expresses the Happiness of pure and holy Souls by *Seeing God*, he may well be thought to intend thereby, the strong sense that God will give them of himself, and the intimate familiarity we may hope to have with the first Wisdom, Purity and Goodness: and then the height and dignity of that state to which we shall hereby be advanced; together with the vast measure of knowledg and love which he will communicate to us; the exquisite and most delicious pleasures which will spring from thence, and overflow our Souls; the delightfull passions whereby we shall be transported; and the inconceivable satisfaction which we shall have within our selves. For if *St. Philip* said here, *Lord, shew us the Father, and it suffices;* what

what shall we think of that manifestation which he will make of himself to us when we shall be uncloathed, and have nothing to interpose to hinder our clear sight of him, and full converse with him? We are not able to conceive how mightily it will affect our hearts. We must stay till that happy day of our Lord's appearing, to be satisfied to what degree of honour and bliss he intends to promote us: But sure enough he will come, and not fail our expectation. The Certainty of this happiness may well be included in our Saviour's promise of *Seeing God*: Who will give us a sure possession of himself, and undoubted contentment, to the very height, in the enjoyment of him; and that in an endless life, without any disquiet or disturbance, without alteration or change, without weariness or disgust; in a never-ceasing ecstasy of joy and delight, to find our selves united to him, the Almighty Lord and possessor of Heaven and Earth, the Fountain of all that is good and amiable in this world, who here entertains us with so many pleasures, that by them we may guess what he is able and willing to doe for them, who have no greater care then above all things to please him.

They

They shall be fixed in a stedfast sight, that is, enjoyment, of him, to their infinite satisfaction.

IV.

And if we mark the words of S. *John*, who speaks this more fully, and tells us, in the place before named, *we shall see him AS HE IS*, (which he makes the reason and cause of our being *like him*,) they will imbolden us still to seek into a farther meaning of this phrase. And since we can enjoy nothing without a knowledg of it preceding, we are to understand, that to *see God as he is*, will be to have our minds filled with a knowledg of him, so clear, so distinct and strong, that it will even turn us into his own Nature, Life, and Bliss. We shall not behold, that is, know him, as we do now, by similitudes, resemblances, and expressions borrowed from other things, (which is all our natures are here able to bear ;) but by a clear notion of him formed in our minds ; wherein our hearts will be infinitely pleased, and feel his happiness come flowing into them.

My

My meaning may be thus explained :
As it is an imperfect sight of a man which we have in a Picture , though drawn by the most curious hand and strongest fancy ; and the man himself, if he stand before a Looking-glass , will in a moment draw an Image more like him , then the skilfullest Artift can delineate all his life long, especially if he never saw the person , but onely had a description of him in a book or by report : just such is the sight or knowledg that we have of God in this world, either by his Word, or by his Works , or by the Idea's of our own mind ; a very imperfect thing, and much like the picture of a person which we never yet had before our eyes. But hereafter , when he will be pleased to appear, to give us a more immediate sight of him , without these helps , and present himself to our mind as the face to a glass ; this will be to know him indeed, and to *see him as he is*. Now as the sight of a Friend, when he presents himself to the eye , doth marvellously refresh and comfort us ; and there is a sense of pleasure imparted to us in the very beholding a rare beauty , which we are not like perhaps to see any more : so this *Seeing God*

God is no barren thing, but instantly infuses the highest satisfaction and delight into pure hearts; who by knowing his blessed Nature, will find it imprinting it self (as it were) upon them, and making every one of them to be the blessed Image of it. Look what God is, that they by the sight of him shall be: He will dwell in them, as the image of a thing does in the glass: And they shall be possessed of him, of his life, of his joys, by having a sensible perception of the Wisdom, the Goodness, the Purity, and all the other Perfections that shine in himself.

V.

Or if this be too hard to be understood, let us content our selves to know, that to SEE GOD *as he is*, is to enjoy him *as he is in heaven*; that is, according to that manner and measure wherein he shews and manifests himself in those celestiaall places. Pious Souls shall really perceive all the effects of his Bounty, Wisdom and Power, which are known and communicated in that other world. Which as it is higher then this; so hath more of God to be seen in it,

it, then can be discovered here. All that the holy Angels see and enjoy of him, all that Good which he lets forth out of himself in that glorious place, wherein above all other he is said to be, shall be the portion of those happy Souls; who may be said therefore to see him *AS HE IS*. They shall not enjoy him in so low a manner as the highest and the most highly beloved persons have enjoyed him in this world, where there is but little of him: but in the noblest manner that he can be enjoyed; so as the heavenly Ministers, yea our ever-Blessed Lord, are made partakers of him. For when our Lord prays that his Disciples may behold or see his glory, which the Father had given him, xvii. *Joh. 24.* his meaning is, (according to what I have said of the word *Seeing*,) that they might have their share at last with him in his Happiness, and be admitted to take a part with him in that supreme Dignity, to which he was ready to be advanced. And thus when St. John invites others into the Christian Society, telling them that *their fellowship was with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ*, i *Joh. i. 3.* it is as much as to say, that they could nowhere be so happy; because it is the singular

singular priviledge of Christian people, to be admitted unto a partnership with God and our Saviour in their most happy life, and to have hopes and expectation to partake with them in their eternall Bliss.

VI.

Which may very well give me occasion to adde, that since Grace, Mercy and Peace come to us now from God, *the Father, Son and Holy Ghost*; we may hope in this *Vision of God* to have as well a clear Knowledg of that ever-Blessed *Trinity*, as a full communication from their ineffable Love. We shall understand that Holy Mystery, which now the sense of our weakness forbids us to pry into; and be able, perhaps, to unfold how the *Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost is one God, without any diversity or separation of nature*, (as *St. Austin* expresses this Mystery;) which I durst not, in my former Treatise, adventure to explain. For *St. Basil* had taught me to mark this, in those words of our Saviour, (*x. Joh. 27. My sheep hear my voice,*) that he says, *αὐτοὶ, ὡς ὁ λόγος, they hear, not question or dispute. They believe he is the Word of God,*

*Epist. cxii.
ad Pauli-
nam cap.
19.
Homil. de
Martyre
Mamante.*

God, but do not ask how: nor say, if he was alway, then he was not begotten; or if he was begotten, then he was not alway. These are not the words of the Sheep of Christ: who receive his voice, and enquire no farther. And I had learnt also from a great Divine of our own Nation, (to whose grave judgment I thought there was a greater veneration due, then to the little forward Censurers of this Age,) that the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity is an Argument more fit for Meditation, in Prayers and Soliloquies, then for Controversie, or Scholastick Discourse. We believe one Divine Nature in three Persons: and that the Divine Nature in the Person of the Father required Satisfaction for the Transgressions of men against his Holy Laws; and that the same Divine Nature in the Person of the Son undertook to make Satisfaction for us, in taking our Nature on him, whereby he had by right of Consanguinity the authority and power of redeeming us; and the same Divine Nature in the Person of the Holy Ghost doth approve and seal, as he speaks, this happy and ever-blessed compromise. But what it is to be a Person, and what manner of distinction is between the Persons in the Blessed Trinity,

D^r Jackson
son Pref
to Cathol.
Church.

Know-
ledge of Je-
sus Christ,
Chap. xxv.

are points, saith he, which I never had a mind to dispute after the manner of the Schools, but was always ready to admire, what I knew not to express.

Greg. Naz.
Orat. 34.

For what is it that we can say of God, who can conceive so little of him? It is an ancient saying of Plato, that to conceive God, is difficult; to express him, is impossible. But he should rather have said, in the opinion of a greater man, *Ἐξάτου μὲν ἀδυναστον, νοῆσαι δὲ ἀδυνατώτερον*, It is impossible to express him, and more impossible to conceive him. "For that which we can conceive in our mind, we may declare in words; if not indifferently well, yet at least obscurely; provided they that hear us are not dull of understanding: But to comprehend in our mind so great a thing as God, is utterly impossible; not onely to the dull and stupid, *ἀλλὰ τοῖς λίαν ὑψηλοῖς καὶ φιλοδέοις*, but to the most sublime Souls, and those who are lovers of God. Alas! all that comes to us from him now, is but onely a short glance, *καὶ οἶον μεγάλην φάτις μικρὸν ἀπαύγασμα*, and as it were a little beam of a great Light. We may call it a full knowledge of the Blessed Trinity, (as Origen * doth) when we can say,
The

Ib p. 548.

* In vi.

Rom. p.

633 and

see Greg.

Nazian.

Orat. 36.

p. 594.

The Father is Light, and in his Light, which is the Son, we see Light, the Holy Ghost. But how far short is this of what we long to know of these *Three in One*?

How much are we in the dark still? And what a satisfaction will it therefore be, to see them clearly shining on us, and discovering their Blessed Nature to us? which hitherto no man hath been able to find out, and whether ever any shall find, let those inquire who have a mind.

"In my opinion, saith the forenamed Greg. Naz.
ibid.

"Father, then we shall find, when this
"Divine, this God-like thing, our Mind
"and Reason, shall be intimately joyned
"with its heavenly kindred, and the I-
"mage shall return to its Archetype or
"originall Patern, of whose acquaintance it is now so desirous. And this seems to me to be that which is so much discoursed of, *to know as we are known.*

Now we *know onely in part*, saith St. Paul, (to whose words he hath respect, 1 Cor. xiii. 11, 12.) we behold rather the *images* of things, then the things themselves; and those also but *darkly*, and in a cloud: but then we shall *see face to face*, and behold God so clearly, that we shall know him as he knows us.

“ He hath a double knowledge, says *Elias Cretenfis* upon those words of *Nazianzen* : “ one whereby he simply knows “ all things ; and another whereby he “ knows his own Image, when it is not “ quite spoil’d, which is accompanied “ with love and delight. And in this latter sense *Gregory* here understands it. “ For look how much serenity and stillness, void of all perturbation, God “ beholds in his own Image ; so much “ of his knowledge will he bestow upon it : giving to every one a measure “ of illumination answerable to its purity and holiness. Then we may hope to discover those things which are Secrets now ; and no more understood by us, then a Child understands the thoughts of the wisest men. For if *St. Paul* himself (as *St. Chrysostome* discourses upon those words,) he who knew so much, compares himself to an infant while he was in this state ; what may we think of our selves ? how childish are our thoughts ? and how like children do we speak about Divine matters ? especially of the transcendent Nature of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ? But how resplendent then must the conceptions be of our grown estate, since in this infancy

cy of knowledge God hath revealed so much of himself to us, beyond the thoughts of former times? If these things be so bright which we see now but in a glass, and obscurely too; think what the sight of the face will be. And the better to understand this difference, and to dart a ray of light, saith he, though but duskyish, into thy mind, look upon those things under the Law now that Grace shines. Before Grace came, they appear'd great and wonderfull: but hear now what *S. Paul* saith of them after Grace, *2 Cor. iii. 10.* that *even those glorious things had no glory, in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.* Such is the difference between the knowledg we now have, and that which we shall have hereafter: even what we see of God here, though, as *S. Paul* says, so exceeding glorious, hath no light in it, in this respect, by reason of that light which transcendeth. And therefore if our Saviour pronounced his Disciples blessed, because their eyes saw, and their ears heard such things as the old Prophets and just men had long'd to see and hear, but could not attain that happiness: how much more blessed shall we find our selves, when we come to see

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things

things as much beyond what is now manifested, as this Revelation is beyond the ignorance of former Ages? We shall both wonder at our childish presumption, in offering to talk of things so much above our reach : and wonder at the grace of the ever-blessed Trinity, which hath conducted us notwithstanding to the sight of their undivided Glory.

VII.

But it is time to put an end to this ; and therefore I shall say no more of this promise of being so happy as to S E E G O D , but that there is a sense to be made of it which will admit the Body, as well as the Soul, to a share with him in those supreme Felicities. For when an exceeding great Splendour, beyond any created Light , appeared to Holy men in ancient times, they called it by the name of *God* ; (who was hereby represented to be present with them ;) and the beholding this is called *Seeing God*. As when *Moses* saw the Bush in a flame, and from thence a light broke forth at noon-day (as *Greg. Nyssen* speaks) *καὶ τὸ ἥλιον ἦν ὡς*, brighter then that

of the Sun, we reade that he thought of approaching to behold with his eyes the wonder of that light; but, which was more wonderfull, (as the same Father goes on,) he had his ears illuminated with its beams, *καὶ ἡ τῆς φωτὸς ἐκείνου φωνὴ* and the voice of that light forbad him to come near the mountain. Whereupon he presently apprehended that there was a Divine Presence in the Bush; and it is said, *He hid his face*, (out of reverence and a holy dread,) *and was afraid to look upon God*, iii. *Exod.* 6. Thence this Mountain is called the *mount of God*, v. 1. and xviii. 5. from this glorious presence here; which appeared afterward also to give the Law from the same place. After which you find that he, and *Aaron* with his sons, and the seventy Elders of *Israel*, being invited by God to approach towards the foot of that Mount where he spake with *Moses*, it is said that *they saw the God of Israel*, xxiv. *Exod.* 10. In both which places, though *Maimonides* would willingly understand a spirituall sight of God with the mind, (being afraid lest any man should imagine God to be corporeall;) yet he acknowledges it is safe enough to interpret it as the *Chaldee*

*More Ne-
voc. part. 1.
cap. 5.*

doth, of a sight of that *Glory* which I treated of in my former Book, (Chap. IV.) or of an *Angel*, which in a luminous Body appeared to them.

* Tit. Kid.
duhinc. 11.

But this last is rejected by a Rule in the *Talmud* * where this very place last named is explained. It is this : *He that interprets a verse of Holy Scripture always according to the literall sound, is a Liar ; and he that addeth to it, is a Blasphemer. As for example, when it is said, they SAW THE GOD of Israel ; if any body interpret it literally, he is a Liar, for the God of Israel cannot be seen : And if any one adde, that they saw the Angel of God, he blasphemously gives the honour of God to Angels. The Chaldee onely is in the right, who says, They saw the G L O R Y of the God of Israel. And so S. Cyrill of Alexandria understood it, in the like case, when he observes, the people were brought to Mount Sinai that they might be both Auditours and Spectatours of God, ὡς ἐν τῇς θείας αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀπορρήτου δόξης, or of his Divine and secret Glory. Which, having never been seen out of the Secret place, made now a most illustrious appearance : and at the bottom of it (called his feet) there was a pavement (on which*

L. 3. Gla.
phy. in
Exod.
23. 20.

which the Glory stood) very bright, and becoming the *Majesty* that was upon it. For the Text says, it was *like a Sapphire-stone, and as clear as the purest and serenest sky*. A token, I suppose, of the Divine favour towards them; which the clearness of the Heavens very well represented, as clouds and darkness were signs of God's displeasure. And accordingly it follows, (v. 11.) that he *did not lay his hand upon the nobles of Israel*; i. e. did not hurt them: (though the common opinion was, that if men saw such a sight, they should die presently.) No, so far were they from receiving any harm by it, that they did not merely *see* God, but also *eat and drink* of the reliques of the Sacrifices that had been (v. 5.) newly offered to him. He entertain'd them with provision taken from his own Table; and they feasted with his *Majesty*, to their great joy and satisfaction.

Such a *Glory*, I told you, *S. Stephen* saw, when his persecutors were going to stone him. And it is reasonable to suppose that, in some part of the Heavens, God now manifests himself in a most glorious visible Majesty, to the exceeding

ceeding ineffable joy (not terrour and affrightment) of those who shall be admitted to approach to that *Light*, which is now *inaccessibile*. So that this will be a part of our eternall happiness, to live in those pure clear Regions, where unknown Glories and most splendid magnificent sights will present themselves to us: where we our selves shall be cloathed with a brightness like that wherein our Lord appeared to *S. Stephen* and *S. Paul*; and behold him in a greater Majesty and brightness then that was, because our capacities will be enlarged to make room for more illustrious manifestations of God to us. We shall live in that place, (as was said before) where *he dwells in light unapproachable* by mortall men; in the company of the holy Angels, who, as so many Stars of glory, will add, if it be possible, to the splendour of that place; and with our Blessed Saviour; *God-Man*, whose glorified Body we shall behold. And so behold it, that we shall *bear the image of the heavenly*, as *we have born the image of the earthy*. We shall be made immortall, that is, we shall be *ever with the Lord*, in such glorious Bodies as his is: so that in our selves we may see the Glory of God.

For

For it must be noted here, that though our Happiness will begin when our Spirits depart this life ; yet it will not be perfected till the Son of God shall come the second time to raise our bodies out of the dust , that they may have a part with our Souls in a never-dying Life. Till then , the Happiness I speak of, it must be confessed , will not have its Crown or utmost Consummation. But yet the Soul in the mean time (I shall prove in its proper place) doth not lie asleep, nor hath all its Powers bound up in a cold and lethargick dulness ; though it have not attain'd the utmost enjoyment of that Good for which it hopes. Our Saviour seems to make these two distinct things ; the putting us in possession of everlasting life, and the raising us up at the last day. *vi. Joh. 40. This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may HAVE EVER LASTING LIFE, and I will RAISE HIM UP at the last day :* which he repeats again *v. 54.* The former of which expressions may well denote the comfortable Hope we have of Happiness, when Soul and Body shall be untied ; and the other,
the

the perfection of this Happiness, when they shall be again united. We shall enter into a great part of Felicity, when we quit these Earthly Tabernacles ; our Souls shall then feel themselves alive, and alive in the midst of those delights that will still increase and never have any end: and they shall joyfully expect the Resurrection of the dead, and the Glory wherein our Saviour shall then appear, and all his Saints together with him ; who having received *abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by Jesus Christ.*

Thus I have said a little concerning this great promise of *SEEING GOD*; and it is so little, that I feel my self unsatisfied, and would fain penetrate farther, or at least speak more distinctly of this *ETERNALL LIFE*. But this small glance we have had of it may well awaken our Souls, and excite them in the worst condition here to burst out into those words, which the Authour of the Commentaries upon *Job* (under the name of *Origen*) puts into that Holy man's mouth.

Lib. I. p.
448, 449.

*Thither will I go, where the Tabernacles
of*

of the Righteous are, where are the Glories of the Saints, where is the Rest of the Faithful, where is the Consolation of the Godly, where is the Inheritance of the Mercifull, where is the Blessedness of the Undeified. Thither will I goe, where Light and Life dwells, where Glory and Mirth, where Gladness and Exultation inhabit; from whence Grief, Sadness and Sighing fly away; where the former Tribulations, which afflict the Body upon this Earth, are no more remembred. Thither will I goe, where we shall lay down our Troubles, where we shall have a reward of our Labours; where is the Bosome of Abraham, where the Propriety of Isaac, where the Familiarity of Israel; where are the Souls of the Saints, where the Quires of Angels, where the Voices of Archangels; where is the Illumination of the Holy Ghost, where the Kingdome of Christ, where the never-ending Glory, and the blessed Sight of the Eternall God the Father. Thither will I go, there I hope to arrive: not complaining, not finding fault, much less cursing and blaspheming; but blessing and praising, and with giving of thanks, saying, The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; as it pleased the Lord, so it is come to pass. Whatsoever pleases God is good; what-

whatsoever pleases him is just. It pleased him to give ; his pleasure was good : it pleased him to take away ; his pleasure was just. All that the Lord wills is Life, is Light, is Rest and Peace, is eternall Blessedness. Whatsoever pleases the Lord therefore, whether to enrich or to impoverish, all is incorruptible and endless Bliss. Blessed is the man, O Lord, whom thou chastenest. As pleases the Lord, so it is : Let the Name of the Lord be blessed world without End. Amen.

C H A P. II.

*A more particular Discourse of
this L I F E.*

T H E R E is the greatest Reason that all Christians, as the same Authour goes on, *should say and doe and think thus in all circumstances, and in all things that occurre* ; and say so with the devoutest, the most humble and chearfull Submission to him : since it is the will and pleasure, you heard just now, of this Great Lord, that his Son *Jesus* should give us, after our short labours or sufferings here, *Everlasting Life*. The very name of which sounds so delightfully, that we cannot well presently cease to speak of it ; nor chuse but desire to be better acquainted, if it be possible, with so transcendent a Bliss. It concerns us more then any thing else to understand it, and to be sure of it : For the Hope of it is our Refuge, the Anchour, the Stay, yea the Joy and comfort of our hearts.

hearts. And therefore, for the sake of those who desire to be led into a more particular knowledge of this Happiness, I shall venture something farther in the description of it : and know not how to conduct them better in this enquiry, then by explaining, as clearly as I can, these two words, LIFE, and the ETERNAL duration of it.

And if the nature of the *First* be examined ; you will find, that LIFE is nothing else but the exercise of all those faculties and powers, which are proper and peculiar to us, upon their true and naturall objects. Whence it is that wicked men are said, in the Sacred style, to be *dead*; because nothing that is reasonable; nothing that constitutes the form of a man, acts in them : and on the other side, they that are converted from Vice to Vertue are said to be made *alive*; because such persons onely imploy and make use of all those powers which belong to reasonable creatures, and have devoted themselves to the best improvement of them. There is in a man, as *Philo* excellently expresses it, φιλόθεον καὶ φιλόδεν δόγμα, a certain notion and sense that loves God, and is a friend to Vertue : which when

περὶ τὸ θεὸν
χρῆσθαι, &c.

when it is extinguished in his Soul, the man is dead; and when it is revived, he is then again made alive. Since therefore St. *John* is speaking of the highest *Life* that man is capable of, we are directed by this notion to look upon it as consisting in the most intended operation of all our Powers, and that in their highest improvement, upon the greatest and noblest Good; which we saw before is God himself.

Let us then consider, that man consists of *Soul* and *Body* as his essential parts; and that the *Soul*, as the better part, must be most considered in this state of *Bliss*; for from it *Bliss* will be derived to the *Body*: and therefore consider again what the several *Faculties* and *Operations* of our own *Souls* are; and farther, how much they shall be enlarged, and their force increased, by the mighty change which shall be made in us at death and at the resurrection; and lastly, how that all these *Faculties* thus improved, and made bigger than they themselves can now comprehend, shall be filled to the brim with that fullest Good: and we shall be able to frame in our mind some distinct apprehension of this *blessed Life*. Now we all know

there are two Faculties of our Soul, the *Understanding* and the *Will*, upon which all Operations depend: and it is as certain, that the satisfaction and felicity of the Understanding can consist in nothing but in *Knowledge* and contemplation of the *Truth*; and that the happiness of the Will consists in the *Love* of that which is *Good*: And by necessary consequence, the utmost satisfaction of both these is in the clearest Contemplation of the highest Truth, and in the most ardent Love of the highest Good. And therefore every one sees where we must begin to speak of this most Blessed L I F E.

I.

Which consists in the greatest Treasures of Divine Knowledge, by the contemplation of the fairest Object; which is the exercise of the prime Faculty in man, and the good of his Soul, as it is rationally. For the better understanding of which let us consider, (1.) that the Soul in it self is apt to receive the notice of all manner of things: as we may easily discern, if we do observe, how things most contrary in themselves can agree to lodge together in our Mind; and we behold

hold them one after another, or both together, without any disturbance, yea with abundance of pleasure. But, (2.) whatsoever our capacity now is, we find it is very little that we actually know, by reason of many impediments that we are clogg'd withall. And yet that little, when we are masters of any notion, communicates so much pleasure to us, that we are hugely desirous of having our minds enlarged to know more; and think it necessary to our happiness, that we should be put into a condition of more free and undisturbed converse with Truth. When therefore (3.) we shall be rid of this clog, being either alone without this body, or having it made so spiritual, that it will be under absolute command, and when we shall be in a still and quiet place, and enjoy perfect settlement of mind and peace of conscience, (the want of which is the onely thing conceivable to disturb an unclothed Soul in its contemplations,) we may reasonably hope to be put into that most desirable condition. But we finding (4.) even in this narrow condition, wherein our Souls are pent up, such an infinite thirst after Knowledge, that the Mind of man is never satisfied; we may guess by that how

vehement this desire will grow, when our Souls shall be no longer imprison'd, and their capacities so much enlarged. And therefore you may consider farther, (5.) that if this capacity and this desire in our Souls be not filled, we shall be so far from leading an happy life, that we shall be more miserable then we are now; because we shall be more able to discern our wants. And thence we may conclude that, to make us happy, our Mind shall be gratified, and its widened enlarged Faculties filled with a Divine light, proportionable to the power it hath to apprehend.

Well then, (6.) considering that all objects are finite, and limited both in their nature and number, except God alone, who contains in his own Being all things that are and can possibly be; our Minds will certainly be carried to him, as the onely object that can perfect their Happiness, by satisfying their boundless desire of wisdom and knowledge. He alone *can* fill those Minds who long to know all things, and who have an aptitude to a vaster knowledge then now can be conceived. And (7.) who can doubt but he *will* fill them, since he hath pro-

promised, as you have heard, by our Saviour, that the *pure in heart shall see him?* that is, know him and contemplate him in that Eternall LIFE which *Christ* hath revealed? For in this our enjoying God must begin: and it may well be called SEEING in Scripture, because *Knowledge* to the Mind is the same with *Seeing* to the Eyes; and the *Understanding* to the Soul is the same with the *Eye* to the Body. And (8.) we can as little doubt but that their Souls will be most happy who shall lead such a Life, which begins in their admission to this blessed Sight. The contemplative Life, even in this world, hath been thought by the greatest Philosophers to be the most excellent, and in a manner Divine; as *Aristotle* endeavours to prove by severall Arguments in the conclusion of his *Ethicks*. Lib. x. c. 7, 8. Now the more excellent the object is which we contemplate, the more excellent is the contemplation it self. From whence he concludes, in another place, xii. *Meta-phys.* that God must needs be the most Blessed; because he perfectly and perpetually contemplates himself; whom all acknowledge to be the most excellent and perfect object. And since the Understanding, says he, conceives by a kind

of conjunction with that which it, understands, so that in some sort they are made one; from thence also we may argue, that his Contemplation of himself must needs be the most excellent, because it is the most intimate, as well as constant and never interrupted enjoyment of the most excellent Being. The more then our mind can be fixed on God, and the more we understand of him, and the nearer we approach to him, the more we shall partake of his most blessed Life; who being most intimately One with himself, never ceases to contemplate his own most adorable Perfections.

You will be the more sensible of this, if you do but imagine how happy many a man would think himself, could he but raise his mind to understand the wonderfull frame of the World, and discover the rare wisdom that lies hid in the contrivance of every part of so goodly a Fabrick. If there be such pleasure in looking into the curious composure of this great Book of the Creatures, and searching after all the mysterious learning contained in it, (which employs the study of innumerable souls night and day;) you may easily conceive it must
needs

needs be a most sublime satisfaction to know him clearly who is the Authour of this Structure, whose Artifice now ravishes contemplative minds into such admiration. They seem to have meant nothing else anciently who discoursed of the Musick of the Spheres or celestiall Orbs, but the extraordinary pleasure and delight wherewith the minds of those Philosophers were struck, who beheld the orderly and gracefull motion of those heavenly bodies. And the same men said the Mind of man was an *Harmony*, because of the well-set notions whereof it is composed, and the sweet touches that it gives us when it is in tune, and runs into coherent thoughts and orderly speculations. Now look what joy it would be to a contemplative man, if he could know the Art there is in the frame of the Heavens, or if he could but so reflect upon his own Soul as to know its nature, all its motions, the spring and the manner of them, nay, but to know his own Body, which, as the Psalmist says, is so *fearfully and wonderfully made*, that it astonishes our minds when we seriously think of it; and by this you may judge what an happy life it will be, to be acquainted with God, by whose *wisdom*

the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth, and who fashioned all our Souls, and curiously wrought all the members of our bodies, where no eye could see but onely his own; yea, to know so much of him, that ———

But it is not in my power to make you understand what this Knowledge shall be, for that would be to place you in Heaven. Nay, we cannot conceive how God himself should make us know it in this state; unless he work a change in us, and cause these bodily operations to cease. All that I can doe is, to make you understand, that our Souls shall be enlarged to know more then now we can conceive, and that we shall be as inconceivably pleased in that knowledge: for the very hope of it now is not without its singular pleasure. You will ask, perhaps, But what is it that we shall know of him? Do you tell us of a mysterious Darkness, or, which is all one, an inapprehensible Light? This is but to know that we are ignorant. And who can fasten his heart on things of which he hath no perception? or delight in the thoughts of that with which he hath

no acquaintance? I answer, We are already acquainted, blessed be God, with something of him; though, as I have said before, we *see but through a glass, darkly*, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. As a glass represents not the thing it self, but its image; and he that sees a thing in a glass doth not know it immediately from its self, but from its image: such is the knowledge we have of God in this life. We know him by the effects of his Wisdom, Power, and Goodness; and by the revelation he hath made of his Mind and Will in his Gospel. We know him not immediately and by himself; but we know, as it were, an Image of him, in his Works and in his Word. And though this knowledge be but obscure, and not so clear as we desire; yet so much is plainly revealed, that one day we shall *see him face to face*: that is, we shall be more nearly present to him, and immediately contemplate him; who is a Mind and Spirit, joyning himself to our very Mind by himself, and not by an image.

What that is, some excellent Souls seem also to have had a little tast of here in this world; *by gasping with the mouth of their heart* (as St. Austin speaks) to
Confes. Lib.
ix. c. 10.

the fountain of Life, that receiving a small sprinkling from thence, they might perceive after some sort so great a thing. For he saith, that as he and his Mother were discoursing together, a little before she died, of the life of holy Souls in the other world, “they had their thoughts
“carried by degrees above all things sensible, till they touched it a while with
“the whole stroke of their heart. And
“could we but silence the tumult of the
“flesh, could we make all imaginations of
“the earth, the air and the heaven it self
“lie quiet and still; could the Soul it
“self not stir, but, by silencing its own
“thoughts, go beyond it self; could we
“but listen alone to him that made all
“things, and hear him alone speak, not
“by them, but by himself; so that we
“heard his word not by a tongue of
“flesh, nor by the voice of an Angel,
“nor by the darkness of a similitude, but
“him whom our Soul loves in all these, it
“could hear without these; (as he and
“his Mother then did, when with a swift
“thought they touched that eternall
“Wisedom, who is over all:) we might
“easily and sensibly perceive what eternall
“Life is, by such a moment; and
“conclude, that if this moment was con-
“tinu-

“tinued, and all other lower ways of
“thinking vanishing, this alone remain-
“ed, it would be no less then to *enter*
“*into the joy of our Lord.* Thus he and
“he discoursed, till this World and all
“the pleasures in it were forgotten; and
“he cried out, *Son, there is nothing that*
“*I delight in in this Life.*

Now the hope we have, that what
some have felt, for the twinckling of an
eye, by an intimate conjunction of their
Soul with God, we shall all at last feel
in endless life, is a mighty attractive to
our hearts; the greatest of all other,
though we cannot reach it here. There-
fore the Good we are to enjoy is so desi-
rable, because it is bigger then all our
present thoughts; and the greatness of it
is not hid from our eyes, because we
should not understand it, but because we
cannot. What more powerfull argument
can there be to move our affections, then
the consideration that, though we know
not these things, what they are and what
the manner of their enjoyment is, yet, we
know that they shall be known and en-
joyed; and we know also so much of
them and of other things, as gives us as-
surance that the fulness of that know-
ledge

ledge will be beyond all thought pleasant and delightfull to us ? For, (1.) it is now so great a pleasure to the mind, to behold the wisdom which appears in the smallest Mite that creeps on any part of this earth ; that we cannot but be sensible the highest perfection of it is, to have any conception of the Wisdom, the Power, the Goodness, the Eternity, Immensity, Truth, Purity and Providence of Almighty God ; which the longer we look upon, the more we find our minds enlarged, and their thirst increased. This perfection of pleasure then (2.) cannot but be strangely advanced, when we shall come to *see him face to face*, and to *know him as we are known* : for our thoughts of him in that state, as was said before, will differ as much from our present conceptions, as the understanding of a grown Man doth from that of a Child. And then likewise (3.) we may discover some Divine Perfection of his, which no man ever thought of before. New Beauties may reveal themselves to us, of which we have not now the least notice : because God is A L L, and therefore contains more in his Essence, then we ever framed any Idea or notion of. So that,
per-

perhaps, (4.) we shall never cease to make some new discovery or other, but be still beholding more and more of his Glory, to our endless satisfaction.

Let us but cherish some such thoughts as these, and we shall feel presently, by the incomparable pleasure wherewith they affect us, how powerfull they are to draw our hearts towards this blessed LIFE, and all the ways that lead unto it. It was some great delight which they preconceived, that made one Philosopher put out his eyes, the better to be able to contemplate intellectuall things: and which made another travell all the learned world over, that he might have the conversation of knowing men: and a third live xxii years in the fields, that he might discover onely the manners and the workmanship of Bees: and a fourth wish he could be able to look upon the Sun, to see what it is; though he died the next moment after the sight: and all the wise men, to improve their knowing faculties, take such vast and incredible pains. Would any man so toil his brain as the Mathematician doth, were there not a certain ravishment in Knowledge surpassing all sensuall delights? How is
the

the filliest Soul affected, when you bring it the notice of some new thing, of which before it was perfectly ignorant? And all pious hearts how glad are they but to think that they are in the direct path to Heaven? And the sense they have of God sometimes overspreading their hearts, how much doth it transport them, and make them long to have it continue for ever? And therefore think with your selves, if these little notions of sensible things be so sweet, if a small flash of light, that breaks in upon us from Heaven for a moment, be so glorious; what will it be to have our minds so constantly illuminated with the Divinest knowledge, as the air is with the beams of the Sun? How desirable is that state, when we shall be all shining, when our inheritance shall be Light, and when we shall be able to look upon the noon-day brightness?

We all find, that a pure and unspotted Beauty hath a strange power in it to charm the dullest minds. Let us suppose then, with a modern Philosopher, that there were a Beauty whose colours were so radiant and bright, that our eye should not be able to look upon it, without the assistance of some new-found Spectacles;
by

by which the luster of the colours, and the exceeding great purity of its light, might be kept from striking our eye with too piercing a splendour. Do you not conceive that, if there were such an object, and such an help to your eye, you should be presented with a sight more ravishing then you ever yet beheld? and that you would desire never to put off those Spectacles, which fortified your eye to see so fair a Beauty; unless you could hope to have your eye made so strong, that of it self it should be able to behold it? Ponder then within your selves, that just as the pleasure, in such a case, would arise together with the excellency of the object, and the increased power of the eye; so will the delight of seeing so sublime an object as God by our raised and strengthened Souls, exceed all that which we now perceive in any worldly good, or even in God himself. And according to the degree to which our Faculties shall be advanced and impowered, which may be as much as God pleases, so certainly will the fulness and the overflowing measure of the delight be, which rises and falls according to the alterations that are in us; for in GOD there is none at all.

To

To all this I have one Consideration more to adde; that the Soul, as you heard before, by knowledge becomes, in a manner, what it knows: not indeed by being changed into the object, but by receiving the object into it self. As we see some Bodies admit others so intirely into them, that they have all the qualities of the nature which they have assumed: (iron, for instance, in the fire becomes red, and warms or burns according as other bodies approach it:) so our Minds, by the knowledge they have of things, are after a sort united to them, and partake so far of their qualities, that Heaven and Earth do not differ more, then two Souls do, who have fixt their thoughts, the one on Earthly, the other on Heavenly things. And therefore, when we shall come to know God face to face, the sight of him will be nothing less then a full possession of him, a kind of becoming what he is, in a true and reall, (as Divines speak) though not essentiall likeness to him, in Wisedom, Righteousness, Goodness, Immortality, and, I may adde, Power too, because we shall perfectly command our selves, and have our present unruly thoughts and affecti-

affections in a due subjection to his sovereign Will. For if, as the Apostle saith, by beholding now (without a veil, but) in a glass the Glory of the Lord *Christ*, we are *changed into the same Image from glory to glory*, 2 Cor. iii. 18. then much more, when we shall come without the help of words and writings to behold the Face of God himself, we shall be transformed into his image; and by being assimilated to his Divine Nature, be made partakers of the joys and pleasures which are inseparable from it.

*And if the transfigur'd Humanity of Christ (as Anselm * meditates) in the* * *in Matthe*
company of two Saints gave such delight, xvii.
when it was seen but for a point of time;
O how great will the pleasure be of seeing
the Deity among the Quires of Angels? If
Peter, beholding the glorified Humanity,
was affected with such a joy, that he desired
never to part with that sight; what
shall we think of those who shall be counted
worthy to see the Divinity? We may ask
the Question as oft as we please, but can
no more give an Answer to it now, then
the Disciples could tell, till they beheld
it on the holy Mount, what it was for
their Master to be transfigured. Then
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we shall understand it, when we come to the High and Holy place where *Jesum* is; of which that Mountain was but a figure. For the present, we must be content, if we can raise up our minds to some small conceptions of its greatness, by such considerations as these. On which I have the longer insisted, because they lay the foundation of what follows, and lead our thoughts to the easier understanding of it.

II.

And if the nature of this LIFE be farther examined, you will find the *Mind* is not the onely Faculty that shall be gratified; but the *Will* shall conceive a Love as great as the Knowledge of which I have discoursed. For as God is the highest object of the Understanding, being the Prime *Truth*; so he is the chiefest object of the Will, being the First and Best *Good*. And therefore as the Understanding shall then most clearly know him; so the Will, in like manner, shall most ardently love him, and find perfect satisfaction in that Love. There is a necessary connexion between these things; and it cannot be otherwise, but that from
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the best Good clearly known, there will flow the greatest Love; drawing along with it the greatest delight, and the most perfect repose. And therefore to SEE GOD, virtually contains in its notion both Love and Delectation, with Rest, or Satisfaction. Love naturally flows from thence, as from its fountain; and the other naturally flow from Love. Which is the highest act of that Faculty which we call the Will, as knowing and contemplating is of the Understanding. Desire, indeed, is the first Motion of it, when any thing is apprehended to be good for us; but that will there be quenched in possession and enjoyment: and no more of it can be conceived to remain, then a longing after the continuance and increase of this Happiness; which, yet, will be so certain, that we shall be rather confident, then desirous.

The Will therefore, having such a glorious object always before it, will be wholly imploy'd in Love, and spend it self, without any decay, in flames of affection towards this Univerſall Good, which shines so fairly and brightly in its eyes. It will apply it self to the enjoyment of it with as great a vehemency as

it can ; and laying its mouth (as St. *Austin* teaches me to speak) to the Spring of all happiness, do more then taste the sweetness of it. We may expect to have it filled with those delicious pleasures which we know attend on Love ; and which in that state will be proportionable to the greatness of the Good that is embraced, and to the strength and arden- cy of the embracement.

And whereas here in this world men are wont to love beyond all reason, whereby their love becomes adulterate, and is mixed with so many discontents, that it proves but a bitter-sweet : There our Understanding (as you have heard) will be in its full growth and highest pitch ; so that as nothing which is rea- sonable shall be omitted to be done, no- thing likewise shall be done that is un- reasonable. This Love will be grounded upon the clearest Judgment ; this Flame kindled by the purest Light : so that there will be no disquiet or trouble in it , but perfect rest and peace.

And whereas in this world mens affec- tions flow to things that are not near so big as themselves, (*i. e.* as their own de-

desires,) and so they languish, and faint, and fall sick, even in the enjoyment of the best good that it affords; because they find it is not a supply proportionable to their want, or to their expectations: There will be no such emptiness nor want of satisfaction in those celestial enjoyments; because we shall embrace not onely our proper good, but that which is commensurate to our desires, and beyond our hopes. Our Affections will not fall then upon that which cannot sustain the whole weight of them; but feeling themselves born up to the greatest height of Love, by a Good so full, that it will leave no room for complaint or uneasiness, they will enjoy the most solid Rest and Satisfaction.

Do but conceive then in your minds what a pleasure it is here in this Life, to Love and to be Beloved; and you will have some notion whereby to take a measure of the **L I F E** we are speaking of, which will consist in such mutuall Love and delightfull Correspondencies. And they who have neither Father nor Mother, Wife nor Children, near Kindred nor Relations, whereon to place their affection; let them consider, if they have

but a singular Friend, what the pleasure is that two persons, who sincerely and purely love, take in the sweet company and conversation of each other. Or if I must suppose any man to be so unkind and so unhappy, as to have no love for any body but his own self, let him think what contentment he hath, and how he is pleased, if he can arrive any thing near to a quiet enjoyment of his dear Self. And such a delightfull state may be a small image of Heaven, where holy Souls will love God with a far greater flame, then ever they did (or shall then) love themselves: because He will appear infinitely more lovely, and to bear also a far greater love to them, then it is possible for them to do to themselves.

Now none can tell how transporting it will be to a good Soul, when it feels it self the Beloved of God, as well as full of love to him: because we cannot think how great the Love of the Almighty is, unless we could know how great he is himself. This is a thing that cannot fail to have a strange power over our affections, and to master them so that we shall be taken quite out of our selves: for we all extreemly love to be beloved.

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If any neighbour shew us an unexpected and undeserved kindness, we are apt to think he is the best person in the world: And the poorest Wretch that is, if we see in him the undoubted signs of an hearty love to us, we cannot chuse but requite it with some expressions of kindness back again. Nay, if a Dog, as I have said elsewhere, or such a dumb creature, do but fawn upon us, and delight in our company, and with a great deal of observance follow us wheresoever we go; we cannot but be so far pleased with this inclination towards us, as to make much of it, and to be troubled to see any harm befall it, and to love to see it play and be well pleased. Judge then what a pleasure it will be to pious Souls, to find themselves beloved of him, who hath put these kind resentments into our nature. To what an height will the sweet breathings of his Love blow up the flames of theirs? Into what Ecstasies will they fall, when they feel by the happy fruits, what an exceeding great affection their Heavenly Father bears to them? It is above our present thoughts to apprehend the joy that will then overflow them: but we may con-

ceive a little of it, if we remember, that *G O D is Love*; and that by our Love *He will be in us*, and by his Love *we shall be in Him*.

But, if you please, let us fall much lower then this; and onely represent to our selves, how great an happiness we shall account it, to be beloved of the whole Family of God in Heaven. Look down from the highest Angel to the smallest Infant that shall be blessed there, from the noblest to the meanest in that celestiaall Court; and there is not one of them but will love us, and be ready to shew their sincere and most affectionate kindness towards us. They that are the greatest in that Glory, will be the greatest Lovers; they that enjoy most of God, will be disposed to let us enjoy most of them. For there is no Pride nor Envy in the heavenly Quire; but the more any are Beloved, the more they will delight in the most effectuaall expressions of their Love. And how can they chuse but interchange to each other unspeakable contentment, who live in the comfort of such indissoluble Amity and Friendship? Nothing can be thought of beyond this to set forth their happiness;

Chap. 2. *more particularly.*

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ness: But we muh conclude with * *Philo*, * *Περὶ φιλίας*, p. 459.
 that this is *the best definition of immortall*
life, *ἔρωσι καὶ φιλίᾳ θεῷ ἀσάρκῃ καὶ ἀπεμάτῳ κατεργασθῆναι*,
to be held fast in an unflesbly and incorpo-
reall love and friendship of God.

You will say, perhaps, that I have been now speaking of some other Love besides his; which, supposing our hearts so fixed on him, we shall not be capable to entertain our selves withall in the other world. For who can divert himself from so beloved a Good, (which sends also such tokens of Love to him,) and turn to any other object? We cannot think that they who love God perfectly, will be inclined to love any thing else. And you may think so still, if you please, without any prejudice to what I have said. This will but make that **L I F E** the more desirable, and move us to wish for such an happy state; where God will be in all our thoughts, and we shall always love him, and yet love one another too. For these are not at all inconsistent, but we may delight our selves in the sweet society of Angels and Saints, and yet always **SEE GOD**; because we see and love Him in every thing. They will be *his* Beauties which we shall behold

behold in them. Those holy ones will shine in *his* Glory. So that our affections will not incline to run to any person merely for himself; but because we behold the face of God in him, and see his Graces wherewith he is adorned. All the Love there will be Divine: And the more of God shall appear in any persons, the more lovely they will be; and the more we shall be ravisht with their company, and rejoyce in a happy league of friendship with them.

Well then, withdraw your thoughts a while from all the things you love here, and raise them above to look at Love where it reigns, and hath an uncontrolled Empire: Behold it sitting on its Throne, advanced to its utmost pitch of Perfection, and shewing it self in its full Glory: And then keep the beginnings of this Heavenly LIFE out of your Souls, if you can. It will be impossible you should not think, there is nothing so much to be desired as to be all Love. O happy Life, will you say, where they love as much as they are able! and where they shall be able to love more then now can be conceived! and where they will be beloved more then they can love;
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and have their Love hereby heightened, when they reflect upon it, in an endless Circle of joy and pleasure ! Let us enter upon this Life with all the speed we can make. Let us begin it this very moment ; and endeavour that no moment may pass hereafter, but in the Love of God. For there is no heart so stony (sure) and insensible , that will not be dissolved into flesh, and receive any impressions from God, if it be once touched with the serious thoughts of this state of Love. No Soul so hard frozen and icy, that will not be thawed and melted to run whether God pleases , when it doth but feel the least spark of this heavenly Fire fall down upon it. Do but go from the reading of this, with the thoughts of this Happiness burning in your breasts, and preserve the fire, for one hour, from going out : and you cannot imagine , till you try, to what an heavenly temper it will purifie and refine your Spirits. It will make you heartily in love with the Life of *Christ* here , which leads to such a blissfull Life in the other world. You will zealously follow those holy desires and resolutions , which you will necessarily feel it inspiring you withall. And you will not suffer any temptation whatsoever

ever to divert you from that earnest pursuit ; but still be saying, as St. *Austin* begins and ends his *Confessions* :

Thou, Lord, hast made us for thee, and our heart is uneasie and restless untill it repose it self in thee. Who being that Good which needs no good, art always at rest; for thou thy self art thine own Rest. But to understand this, what man will give to man? what Angel to Angel? or what Angel to man? Let it be askt of thee, let it be sought in thee, let it be knockt for at thee: So, so shall it be received, so shall it be found, so shall it be opened. Amen.

III,

And the more we think of it, the more we must needs still desire it ; because our Understanding being filled with the knowledge, and our Will with the love of the chiefest Good, we shall sensibly perceive a Divine joy resulting from these, and flowing into our heart with inexpressible pleasure: For it is essentially included in every act both of that Knowledge and that Love, as may be clearly discerned by what hath been already said. We are now compounded
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of different, and sometimes contrary passions; which frequently disquiet us, and disturb our peace, by falling out with our Reason, and with one another. But in that blessed LIFE there will be no such troublesome mixture; no fear, no sorrow, no hatred, no anger, or any the like, remaining: But joy alone, advanced to the greatest height of glory, will be left in the possession of the whole Soul, and have the sole Dominion of it to it self. The reason is, because we shall for ever have the presence of the greatest Good; which will exclude the presence of any evil, to give us the least fear of losing what we love. That's the originall of all our Passions: As we are glad when we enjoy any thing that we love; so we are troubled when we want it, or when we lose it; and we are full of care and solicitude when we eagerly pursue it; and rise up in hatred and displeasure at that which opposes our desires. When Love then is secure by the possession of that Supreme Good, whom no evil can approach, the cause of all other passions will be banished; and Joy alone be left to triumph in the conquest of them. For which cause this heavenly Joy must needs be the more
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excessive, when we shall have nothing else to do, but to rejoyce. This will mightily increase the greatness of it, that there will be no employment for the rest of our Passions, which here, whether we will or no, take their turns together with it: and consequently there will be nothing to diminish the greatness of it, by any trouble or disorder that can be given it.

For the proof of which I need onely refer you to the foregoing discourses, and desire you to reflect upon what you have read of the *Knowledge and Love of God*. You could not but observe how joy and pleasure was so inseparably knit to them, and interwoven with them, that I could not well speak of them, but I must touch upon this also.

I. As for the first of them, we all feel a certain complacency which our very Senses as well as our Understanding takes in objects conformable to them; even before our appetite moves at all towards them. Truly, *the light is sweet*, says the Wise man, *and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the Sun.* xi. Eccles. 7. Look then how much the Divine Light excells

excells all other, and how much the Majesty and Splendour of the Authour of Nature is beyond the best of his Works, the glory and brightness of the Sun: and so much sweeter and more pleasant will it be for our Mind to be filled with that Light, and to behold that first and Originall beauty, from whence all other are derived. We cannot *think* of God and of our Saviour now, without a singular joy: and therefore we shall not be able to S E E them, without an excess of it.

2. And, secondly, as for Love, Joy is a no less necessary attendant on it, or rather is intertwined with it; being nothing else but that delight and pleasure which springs up from the sense of any Good that we have taken possession of. So that look how great the Good is to which the passion of Love hath carried us; proportionable will be the Joy, when we feel that we are owners of it. And if it now please us so much to think that we are really beloved of God, and of his Son *Jesus*; what an endless pleasure will the sense of their Love yield us, when it hath placed us in Heaven? Do but consider now how vast the Love of the Lord *Jesus* is, in coming down from
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Heaven to us ; and that he knows better reasons of his Love then we do, and that his own pleasure is concerned in loving us, and that he cannot but finish his Love to those who are purchased with his Blood, and are of his Spirit ; and it will give a marvellous satisfaction to your heart at present. But what it will do then, when he will have expressed all his Love to us, and perfected his kind intentions towards us, we are not able to tell. We can onely consider a little farther, how he hath plainly told us , that they who love him will *rejoyce* now , because he is gone to the Father. (xiv. *Joh.* 28.) And therefore it must needs be an additionall pleasure in the other life , to *see* (what we here *believe*) our Dearest Lord shining in the Glory of God the Father, and inthroned on the right hand of the Majesty in the Heavens. It will be an exceeding high satisfaction to us, to behold him , who loved us so much, and was so ill requited for it by men ; so gloriously rewarded for it by God himself.--- But it is so easie to apply what hath been said to this purpose, that I shall leave such considerations as these to your own diligence, and note something that is not altogether so obvious.

3. Which

3. Which is, that pious Souls will considerably augment their joy, by the reflexions they will make upon their happiness, and the strong attention of their mind to their own delight and pleasure. For we are never so truly delighted; as when we find that we are not deceived in the comfort and contentment which we promised our selves; and when we take notice of all the pleasing motions that are in our hearts, and duly mark and observe the sweetness of them. Before this reflexion and self-observation, our Souls are onely touched by the Objects which they apprehend, and receive such impressions as they are able to make there: But by this means the Soul touches and strikes it self; sealing those impressions deeper, and pressing them harder upon our spirit. The presence of a Friend, without asking our leave, excites a joy and sudden passion of pleasure in our heart, upon his very first approaches: But when we consider with our selves, not onely that he is our Friend, but how good a Friend he hath been, and what joy he hath now and many other times given us; we then affect our selves with his presence and sweet company, and make the joy greater by minding how

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great it is. For it is the highest kind of life in this world, which hath an apprehension that it lives. This makes the life of a man above the life of beasts, and his pleasures above those that they enjoy. This is it also which makes a man in a Lethargy to be no better then dead; because he hath no perception of his own life. The quicker therefore and the more lively this apprehension of our LIFE and of the happiness and contentment of it grows, the more blessed and joyfull will the LIFE it self be which we shall then lead. If by loving without seeing, we rejoyce in this world *with joy unspeakable and full of glory*; (1 Pet. i. 8.) how glorious will the joy be there, when *Sight* or Knowledge shall be, if I may so speak, in its high-noon, and *Love* at its full sea; and when there will be no declension, much less night, nor the least ebbe any more; and when we shall with the most accurate quickness instantly apprehend and observe every circumstance that adds to our unconceivable happiness?

We have many considerations left us now, in the Gospel of *Christ*, to refresh our minds withall, from his great Love
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in becoming a Man for us, from his Cross, from his Resurrection, from his Ascension and sitting at God's right hand, from his promise of coming again, and the hope we have of reigning with him for ever: but by not attending to such blessed Truths as these, we lose the comfort of them. And when they are mightily urged upon us by others, and the Holy Spirit of God also touches us, and makes us sensible of the glad tidings that they bring us; we lose still a great deal of the pleasure, by not pressing them farther upon our hearts, marking how they are affected with them. And when all this is done, we shall still feel a damp upon our spirits, unless we can comfortably reflect upon our own sincere love to God, and assure our selves that we are persons qualified for this supreme Joy. But there will be no danger of any such defects in that happy World above; where holy Souls will as readily improve, as they easily discern, every thing that gives them satisfaction. As nothing will escape their observation which brings any joy along with it; so they will please themselves in the contemplation of their own pleasures, till they grow greater. And so far they will be from wanting any reflexi-

ons on themselves as the persons whom God loves and delights to honour, that they cannot but perceive it, and be transported with the joyfull sense of it. For, if we should speak strictly, this Joy will be so great, that it will need no attention to it. Its own strength will make it be most sensibly felt; and (as some have ventured to express so sublime a state) it will, by the transcendent force of its delight, essentially reflect upon it self.

4. But let us come down from these heights, and consider again, that as much as the Joy which God hath in himself exceeds all other satisfaction, so much will the Joy which we shall have in him exceed all that we have or can enjoy in any other thing. *In his presence* (says the Psalmist, xvi. 11.) *is fulness of joy, and pleasures everlasting*: which cannot fail to be the portion of those who shall be admitted into his presence, and have the happiness to See him. For since by our sight of him we shall be assimilated to him, (as was said before,) and made in a manner such as he is; we must needs be partakers with him in his Joy as well as in other things; and have such a mea-
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sure of it as exceeds all the measures that our scanty apprehensions can now take of so full a Good. It is too little to say, that this Joy alone exceeds all worldly pleasures, as far as the longest life exceeds a moment, or this whole World the least mote we see in the Sun-beams: rather we may say, as far as God surmounts this World, or Eternity Time; between which there is scarce any comparison to be reasonably made.

5. To all which you may subjoyn this, as the highest consideration of all, that such are the Perfections of the Divine Nature, such is his infinite Bounty, that they who are united to him in Love, will meet with an infinite Satisfaction. All objects of our delight here may be comprehended by our Understanding, and we may see *an end of all their perfection.* For which reason they may be slighted by our Will, as less then our selves, and unable to give us the contentment we desire. It is at our choice whether we will love them or no, or at least what portion of our love we will bestow upon them: and therefore it is no great joy that they can give to one, who feels how much he is above them.

But God now is so full, so infinitely above us, that he intirely satiates the heart of those that love him. We cannot refuse him, when we are perfectly acquainted with him; nor is it at our liberty to love him but to such a measure. No, He will force our Soul then to love him and delight in him as much as it can; yea, more then naturally it could without the presence of such a Good; more then it believed it should ever have been able to love. And this is not a force of which the Soul grows weary, as in other cases when it is strained beyond its present capacity; but a pleasing violence, to which it opens it self, and perceiving the power of that great Good, would willingly be more possessed of it. The pleasure that it feels sweetly dilates it, and with a gratefull constraint so stretches and widens it, that the extension becomes natural to it. And with all this New Love created in it, the joyfull Soul will for ever remain thus big; embracing its most beloved Good, and delighting it self in this largeness of Love.

This is the incomparable pleasure of the LIFE that *Christ* promises. All other

other joys are but cold and dull, in respect of the flames and spirits of this. It is but a dream of drowzy delight which we enjoy here, in comparison with that substantiall sprightly pleasure which our Souls will find in the bosom of God's Love; wherein they will repose themselves with such a transport, as if they would lose themselves to be all one with him. Whosoever he be therefore that is insensible of all other charms, let him hearken to this; and see what pleasure can doe, to make him in love with this Life of our Lord. Pleasure, I say, which all mankind most passionately desires, be it never so weak and imperfect: the Light of all good things; which should we suppose separated from humane life, it would be nothing but darkness and horreur. And if thou knowest not yet what spirituall delight means, let thy fleshly pleasures tell thee something of this happiness. If thou art not so sottish, as never to have a thought of any thing beyond the satisfaction of thy fleshly lusts; think how much more noble a Spirit and the pleasures of it are, then a Body and all its delights. And then raise up thy mind a little higher, to consider, that if pleasure have now such

power over thee, here are the greatest to invite thee. Pleasures, that as much exceed those of the spirit, as they do those of the flesh: Pleasures at God's right hand; the very joy of the most High, the Father of spirits; the pleasures of God himself. O come, come, if thou lovest thy self, and thy own perfect satisfaction, come, I say, whosoever thou art that eagerly followest after pleasure, to the contemplation of these joys which are so sublimely sweet. And be content to part with all other, if that be the onely means to be possessed of these. What if thou shouldst suffer, by devoting thy self to pursue these, in many outward accommodations? nay, if thou shouldst lose this Life, to attain that which is Eternall? It will be no dear purchase, but bring thee in an increase of more then an hundred-thousand-fold. Whatsoever thou expendest here for the Lord *Jesus*, He hath given thee his Bond for it, that it shall be repayed with *good measure, heaped up, pressed down, thrust together, and running over into thy bosome.* vi. *Luk.* 38. An overflowing joy it will be, but it runs over into our own breasts. None of it will be spilt beside our selves; but it will trickle down, with a delicious sweet-

sweetness, into our own hearts: Which should stir up our most thirsty desires, methinks, to be made partakers of it. If we fore-taste the least drop of it in such Meditations as these, it should fill our hearts with sharp longings after more; and dispose us to say with the devout Father I named at the conclusion of the foregoing particular,

Far be it from me, O Lord, far be it from the heart of thy servant, to think myself happy, whatsoever joy I have in this world. There is a Joy which is not the portion of the wicked, but of those who serve thee freely; whose joy thou thyself art. And that is the truly-happy life, to rejoyce to thee, because of thee, for thee. This is it, and there is no other.

August.
Lib. x.
Confes. cap.
xxii.

O how far distant is this present life from that! Here is Falshood, there is Truth. Here is Disturbance, there is sure Possession. Here is the worst Bitterness, there eternall Love. Here dangerous Pride, there secure Joy and triumph. Here we fear lest he that is a Friend should on a sudden turn an Enemy: there a Friend is always constant, because no Enemy can be admitted thither. Here whatsoever Good

Orat. contra Judæos, Paganos, & Arrian.
cap. xxi.

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we have, we are afraid to lose it: there whatsoever we receive shall be preserved by him, who takes care that neither we pass away from it, nor it from us. Here is Death, there is Life. Here all things that God hath created; there God himself in stead of all, and in all things.

But what humane tongue can extoll that, which no sense of mortalls can comprehend? We will go thither, that we may comprehend it. We will go and see there that which eye hath not seen, and hear there that which ear hath not heard, and understand there what the heart of man cannot now conceive: and seeing, hearing and understanding, we shall exult with unspeakable joy. And what Joy is that, where no Fear will be? What kind of Joy will it be, when thou shalt see thy self a companion of Angels, a partaker of the Kingdom of Heaven, in Royall state with the King of all, desiring nothing, in possession of all things, rich without covetousness, administering without money, judging without Successour, reigning without fear of Barbarians, living an eternall Life without Death?

CHAP. III.

A farther Explication of the Happiness of this LIFE.

IV.

WE must stay, as I have said before, for the resolution of such Questions, till we enter into that Joy. And for the present be glad to know, that our Souls being thus happily disposed, shining with the Divine Light, satisfied with the Divine Love, and rejoicing in both, must needs issue forth in the most chearfull and delightful Praises of God, who hath preferred us to such a blisfull state. For this we all find is one of the naturall effects of Joy, here in this Life. As it transports and raises the Soul above it self; as it makes us eager to possess, if it were possible, more of that Good which gives such delight; and as it makes us for the present forget all other things, all the cares and trou-

troubles of this life ; and , indeed , so much betters and improves our Soul , that of all other things we are not willing to forgo it : So it never fails likewise to employ the tongue in praising and commending that Good , to which it owes it self. How barren soever the Mind be , or what slowness soever there be in our Tongues ; joy and pleasure make us fruitfull in Thoughts , and quicken our Speech to declare the content we take in the company of that which is the cause of it. Nay , the Voice becomes bigger and louder by its means ; and it never utters it self , but with earnest notes of its high satisfaction. And therefore it is impossible for the raviht Soul , when it is come to the delightfull Vision of God , to refrain from joyning with the Heavenly Quire , to give *Glory to God in the highest* , that is , after the most excellent manner , and with the most exalted affections.

As the Understanding , by reflecting upon the blessedness of the whole Man , will excite an extraordinary Joy in the heart , (as I have just now discoursed :) so , by reflecting upon the fountain from whence that happiness flows , and earnestly

nestly observing the Originall of its enjoyments, it cannot but excite in it self admiration and wondering thoughts; and presently employ them to invent the noblest hymns and songs of praise, whereby to magnifie and laud this glorious Goodness of God. And this will make still greater additions to the Joy before spoken of, which must necessarily be intermixed with these most affectionate Thanksgivings; as every one can witness who hath tried this heavenly employment, which the Psalmist, in his experience, found so *good, so pleasant, and so comely.* cxlvii. 1.

Were all the mercies of but one day placed now in a clear view before your eyes, or could you but at once behold all the blessings that are crouded into every moment; what admiration would it raise up in your hearts? what a volume of praises would you be able to compose? and how much sweeter would this one act of lauding and praising God be, then the enjoyment of all the good things you praise him for? Raise up your minds then to conceive the height of those Praises, that will be continually springing and bubbling up from thankful

full hearts, and always filling their mouths; when they shall be able to shoot their thoughts down to the very bottom of their days, and see all the curious Providences of God about them, all the favours they have enjoyed, and all the dangers they have escaped as they passed through the tumultuous Sea of worldly affairs. O what Hallelujahs will it create, when these shall be represented thick together, or stand at once before us? and when we shall not onely look upon the past loving-kindnesses of God in one train of thoughts; but in the next behold all our present enjoyments, the quiet shoar where we are landed, with the riches and pleasures of the Heavenly Country? and when we shall also think again of those that are still future; which are always beginning, and never ending, always present, and always to come? This sure will make the voice of praise more loud and shrill, and every note so sweet, that it will give the most gratefull touch unto the heart.

Look upon the little Birds, and hearken how they chirp and sing in the wide and spacious air, where they have no limits set to their liberty: and then think
what

what a chearfull life they lead, in comparison with one that is perpetually coup'd up in a cage, and spends many lonesome days and melancholick nights in that solitude. And look again upon your own Souls, which we think are capable of the highest pleasures; and cannot you conceive a little how delightfull they will find it, to be always singing, in the vastest liberty and freedom; to be spreading their wings in the boundless Light to which God will bring them; and to be uttering their joys, as they see themselves incompass'd on all sides with innumerable objects of contentment? O how infinitely will it transcend all that they are capable of while they are imprisoned, or rather pinioned, in this body? though one moment of those Joys which are sometimes felt here by holy Souls, is not to be exchanged for all that the world can offer in its stead.

And these Songs will be made the more melodious, by the company that shall joyn together in the most harmonious consort. All the Saints and Angels will make up but one happy Quire; and will all strive, we may imagine, with an holy emulation to excell each other, and with-

without any envy contend who shall sing the loudest and sweetest praises to our Creatour and Redeemer. And what delight, may we conceive, will they take in the delicate strains of each other? How will they be pleased to hear their own voices accompanied with the hymns of so many celestiaall creatures? How will the whole number be even rapt out of themselves by the melting airs of the whole Quire; when they all lift up their voices together, as those myriads of holy ones which St. *John* saw (v. Rev. 11.) acknowledging the Lamb worthy to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing, which (as he says v. 13.) all good Christians even in this world delight to ascribe unto him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever?

The Pagans had some little sense of this pleasure, as we may learn from *Metrodorus* himself: who, though an *Epicurean*, yet in these words, as *Clemens Alexand.* observes, spoke divinely. Remember, O *Menestratus*, who art born mortal, and hast received a life which will have an end, that ascending with thy Soul even
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till thou comest to eternity and the infinity of things, thou shalt see both things to come, and things that have been. For; according to Plato, we shall contemplate with the happy *Quire μακαρίων ὁρίων καὶ δεινῶν*, the blessed Vision and Spectacle. Where we attending upon Jupiter, and others upon other Gods, shall be admitted; if it be lawfull to speak it, to celebrate the most blessed Mysteries. Which we shall joyfully observe; being intire, and insensible of any of those evils which expected us in our latter days. And we shall be admitted to the mysterious contemplation of those perfect and steady sights, in pure light: being our selves pure and disingaged from this body; which we carry now about with us; to which we are tied as fast as an oyster is to its shell. They felt; it appears by these words, very strong motions in their Souls after a sight of those things, to which they could not reach while they were in these Bodies. And they had a faint hope also, that, when they were got loose from these shackles, they should neither be confined nor clouded; but in pure light and liberty rejoyce and be glad in the love of their gods; who they expected would admit them to the knowledge of such secrets, as they imparted onely to

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their

their Friends. For that's the meaning of celebrating the Mysteries; which were Secrets that all were not permitted to see, and when any had seen, they might not reveal; but were kept with festivall joys, after the most solemn manner, by those who were thought worthy of them. To the delight of those feasts he compares the joy they should have in the other life; which they were wont to promise to all those who were admitted to the sight of their Mysteries. There they fancied they should rejoyce in a nobler manner than they did when they followed the pomp of *Bacchus* and *Ceres*; (to whose mysteries this Authour alludes;) and without that noise and tumult which accompanied such trains, behold in quiet the unknown spectacles of the invisible World.

But if you think that all the expressions I have used borrow too much from sensible things; yet remember at least what delightfull touches a sweet voice, or other excellent musick, hath in any moment given your Soul; and conceive then what a pleasure it would be, to have two hours continued like that one minute, or your spirits so delicately
moved

moved for one whole day together. By this means you will the better understand the truth of what I have said : for just such is the pleasure of those Souls, which now strike themselves and touch their own hearts with a lively sense of the Goodness of God towards them; and which feel withall the finger of God giving the like strokes upon them. There is nothing so delicious as this, nothing so powerfull to ravish them out of their bodies. The very strings would crack; and the Soul and flesh would dissolve their Union, should there remain such a powerfull and delightfull motion for some hours, as for a little space they sometime feel transporting them. They cannot but imagine, that the prolonged harmony of one day, should it bless the Soul, would make it account all the pleasures in this world harsh and troublesome; and cause it to cry out, as the man *St. Hierom* speaks of, who after he had dreamt he was in Paradise, called still to those who were about him, "Set me
"again in those flowry fields: restore
"me to those pleasant walks. O let me
"enjoy that melody once more; let me
"hear those sweet songs: trouble me
"no more with any of these worldly

“noises; but bless me again with those
“heavenly touches.

Lift up your minds then by such thoughts as these, to conceive what not one day, or year, or age, but an eternity of such rare ravishing delight would be; and that is a part of that blessed LIFE which I am treating of. Which by your own confession must needs be more desirable then all that can be expressed by Musick and sweet Airs, and melodious Strains and Songs, or any such like words: which must be acknowledged to be weak and imperfect, able to express onely the outward images and shadows of those Divine enjoyments. And the more perfectly you digest and frequently excite such thoughts as these, the more you will apprehend of this bliss; and the more impossible it will be, that any thing should hinder you from beginning to be so happy, by devoting your selves to a Christian life. One part of which is, to praise and bless the Lord at all times; to bear in your gratefull minds a faithfull remembrance of his benefits, and to express it as oft as you can in the most thankfull acknowledgments. In which exercise whilst you seriously employ your
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your selves, you will be able thereby to know in part what the blessing of Eternal Life is, wherewith our Lord hath promised to reward our hearty obedience.

V.

And here it will be seasonable to adde, that such will be our *Knowledge* and *Love* of God, and our true *Delight* in him, that they will produce a most sweet harmony between our Wills and his, and move us to yield a free and constant Obedience to him with all our powers. The *Understanding*, which now is subject to many mistakes and errours, will then shine upon the Will with the rays of the purest Light. And the *Will*, which now is oft too refractory, will not then in the least rebell against the Understanding, but be obsequious to its illuminations. And the *Affections* will be as ready to obey the Will, and follow its motions: which will all agree with the Mind of God, and perfectly correspond to his desires. His Will shall be always done, and ours shall be but a sweet compliance with his. For our knowing him making us like him, will take away all

liberty from us of doing any thing but what he would have us. And the whole appetite being so intirely filled and satisfied, as hath been said, with this great Good, there can be no room left for any inordinate desires; but we must eternally cleave to God, and cannot be turn'd aside from him any more.

And it will not prove any trouble to us neither, to be thus fast bound to his will, and observe all his motions: but we shall fly as swiftly about in that free light, as the winged Angels now do; who never fetch so much as one sigh when they receive his commands, but chearfully in every thing obey his pleasure. Nay, it would be the greatest trouble to us, if we should doe otherways. We should create a disturbance in the midst of that heavenly Rest, should we not thus readily obey him. One groan would spoil all the sweet accents of the joyfull Praises which are there continually offered. Much more would one act of disobedience be so jarring with that harmony, as to make us lose the pleasure of it. But there will be no danger of this; we shall all be changed, as the Apostle speaks, not onely

in our Body, but also in our Spirit : and in this, as well as all other things, that our liberty of indifferency, the freedom we now have to chuse good or let it alone, yea to chuse evill as well as good, shall be turned into a chearfull spontaneous motion towards that which is Good alone. The will, as some have expressed it, shall remain ; but not the choice : we shall willingly serve God ; but not chuse whether we will serve him or no.

For that Sight which we shall have of his Beauty will not let us take our eyes off from him ; and that Love which flows from thence cannot but be exercised by those who have that blessed Sight : and they that cannot but see and love so great a Good, will not be able to turn their minds and hearts inordinately to any thing else. They therefore who shall be accounted worthy of that World to come, will be free from Sin, and from the fear of sinning ; whereby they will be secure of perpetuall Blessedness : which is necessary to make us perfectly happy. For they are very short of it, who are in danger or in fear of losing the felicity they enjoy. Both these will be far remote from that happy World ;

where they will be fixt in their Happiness, because they will be fixt in their Obedience. Which as it may grow, it is possible, still more and more chearfull; so it will infuse a greater sense of the Divine Love into their hearts; and every act wherein they doe the will of God may be rewarded perhaps with a greater increase of happiness.

Who would not chuse then to obey God now, that hereafter he may not be able to doe otherwise? Who would not strive to bring his will in subjection to *Christ*, that he may at last exchange his own will wholly for his; the liberty, that is, of a man, for the liberty of the Divine Nature, which is always determined by an happy necessity to that which is Good? Yea, who would not chuse such an happiness as is always, it is probable, growing more perfect? the excellency of which we can never comprehend, because it will be growing more excellent? A Life so noble, that every operation of it makes it more divine? It is no disparagement to its worth, to say, that we cannot at first know all that we shall know, nor love so much as we shall be able to love, nor possess all the joy of
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our Lord : but it is rather a commendation of it, that after such an height of knowledge, love and joy, as we shall arrive unto at first, we shall be advancing to a greater nearness and familiarity with God.

IV.

But it is time to bring this Discourse to a conclusion, when I have told you, that it is not the Soul onely which will be happy in this *Eternall LIFE*. That word, I said at the first, imports the supreme felicity of the whole Man : and therefore Man consisting of a *Body* as well as a Soul, that must come in for a share in this Bliss, and at last be made partaker of it. Yet I shall not stay to tell you particularly what the *LIFE* of the Body shall be after the Resurrection; because I have been longer then I intended in describing the operations of our nobler part about its highest Good. It shall be sufficient to give you but these *two* marks, whereby to know the exceeding happy condition to which it will be promoted. *First*, it must needs be transformed into a very noble Being, which is to be the companion of such
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an exalted Soul, and be capable to comply with it in these sublime operations. We read much of its brightness and glory, which the Scripture seems to say shall be so great, that it will contend with the splendour of the Sun it self: And we may very well believe it, seeing it is to be the Vesture of a Spirit so illuminated by the Vision of God. For which reason, among others, it may be that the Apostle calls it a *Spiritual Body*. Which as it needs no supports of meat and drink, and is made immortall, and no longer liable to any disease: so is it of a purer sense and a quicker power then this present flesh, moving with so much agility and ease, that we shall feel it is no burthen to us. And the Apostle indeed tells us, (which is the *Second* thing) that *Christ*, by his power which is able to subdue all things to himself, will *fashion it like to his own glorious body*. iii. *Phil.* 21. Now what the brightness of that is, you may guess by the Visions of the two great Apostles, *St. Peter* and *St. Paul*.

The first of which, when he saw our Saviour transfigured in the holy Mount, (*Matth.* xvii.) was so overcharged with joy, that the sight put him in a manner beside

beside himself. For he knew not, saith the text, what he said, when he uttered those words, *Let us make here three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.* He knew indeed that it was *good being there*, ix. *Luk* 33. though he scarce knew where he was. This was the onely thing in his thoughts, that they should be most happy men, might they never stir from that glorious place; but always remain thus transported, as at present he was. Let us be fixed here, was his wish; let us always live in such pure light, and enjoy such beautifull sights: from whence he was loth to take his eyes, or to leave such good company as now *appeared in glory*, v. 31. And yet this, you must remember, was no more then a glimpse of that Glory which our Saviour was to have after his Resurrection, and which he now shines in, and shall one day be revealed. Judge then by this, what happy creatures they will be, whose bodies shall be made *like that glorious body*; which when it was but a while transformed in this world, made the place seem no less then a Paradise. How illustrious will the condition of true Christians be, when they shall not merely dwell in such *Tabernacles*

cles as *St. Peter* wisht ; but in bodies resembling that which was so transfigured, or rather of a far greater splendour : there appearing then, as I said, but a twinkling of that Glory of our Saviour, to whom we shall be conformed.

For if you observe it afterward, when the Heavenly light of our Saviour's glorified Body incompassed the other Apostle *St. Paul*, (to whom he appeared in his way to *Damascus*,) he could not look upon it, as *St. Peter* had done upon the other : but it was so shining, that it put out his eyes, he continuing *three days without sight*. ix. *Act.* 9. And for any thing we know, he had never recovered the use of them more, had not the same *Jesus* restored his sight to him by a Miracle. These senses of flesh were not able to bear a Light so effulgent. It was to deprive them of all their operations, to approach near to such a brightness. And yet such glorious creatures will our Lord make his faithful Servants. So astonishing is his love, that he will never cease his kindness to them, till they be *numbred among his Saints in glory everlasting* ; that is, till he impart his own most excellent glory to them.

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Which signifies that they must be wonderfully changed from what our bodies are now in this vile state ; wherein they are not capable to behold such a glory as shall then be revealed. But the serious belief and hope of it founded upon the word of our Saviour, and of those who were *eye-witnesses* of his Majesty, is a marvellous comfort to us ; and should make us study to purify our selves more and more, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God. We should cleanse and refine our affections, and render them still more spirituall and heavenly ; that being less moved with the things of this world, and finding our inclinations weaker towards them, we may more readily and chearfully comply with the will of God, and prevent as much as we can the resurrection of the dead : when we shall have no lust to doe otherwise then as God would have us, but shall intirely please our selves in accomplishing his good will and pleasure.

¶ For the more faithfully and eminently any persons serve the Lord *Christ*, out of pure love to him and to his Christian Brethren, the greater marks of his favour will he set upon them. Their very Bodies,
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it is probable, will shine in a greater glory, and be made so much the more illustrious, according as their light here shone brighter before men, and moved them to glorify their heavenly Father. For *St. Paul* seems to teach, not onely that the bodies we shall have after the Resurrection will differ as vastly from those we have now, as Earth does from Heaven; but that those heavenly bodies which we shall put on will differ very much among themselves in brightness and glory. As *the glory of the celestiall bodies is one, and the glory of the terrestriall another*: so he tells us, (among the celestiall) *there is one glory of the Sun, and another glory of the Moon, and another glory of the Stars*; for *one star differeth from another star in glory*. So also is the resurrection of the dead. *1 Cor. xv. 40, 41, 42.* That is, some will have bodies more bright then others, and shine as Stars of a greater magnitude; to note them to be persons of eminent rank, who have done very glorious service to their Lord.

The Martyrs, for instance, whose bodies were slain or burnt to ashes for *Christ's* sake, we may well suppose will be more splendid then those who were laid in their graves in peace. Nay, the Church

Church in St. *Austin's* time, out of their great affection to them, wisht to behold the scars of those glorious wounds which they received for *Christ's* sake, shining with a peculiar glory in their immortall Bodies. And perhaps, saith he, we shall see them: For it will not be a deformity in them, but a dignity; and in the body will shine the beauty of their vertue more then of their body.

L. xxii. de
Civ. Dei,
c. 20.

This the Writers, whom we call the Schoolmen, imagine is the *Aureola* or little golden Crown which the Judge will give to rare Vertues. By which they mean some accidentall reward superadded to the essentiall Blessedness. Like the little crown of gold, wherewith the other crown upon the Table of Shew-bread was finished, as the *Vulg. Lat.* renders xxv. *Exod.* 25. from whence this expression seems to be borrowed. But that the overplus of reward which *Christ* will give to some shall consist onely in a peculiar brightness of their body, I see no ground to determine; because God hath so many other ways to crown the faith and love and hope of those whom he delights to honour. It is better to conclude all this discourse with the words of
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* *Ib. cap.*
31.

the same Father, which follow a little after*. *What and how great the spiritnall grace of the Body will be, because the time is not come to make experiment, I am afraid lest all that we say of it be rashly spoken. And therefore I shall onely adde, of which we may be certain, that, as Macarius observes, whether it be a greater or a lesser glory that we attain, we shall all shine together in one most blessed and glorious place. His words are these;*

Homil. 32.

As Birds produce feathers of a different kind, and some fly nearer to the earth, others farther off, but all fly in one common air; or as there is one Heaven, which hath many Stars in it, some greater then others, but all fixed in heaven: So the Saints shall be differently planted εν ενι βασιλει τής Σεότητος, in one Heaven of the Divinity, and in one invisible country. Thither let us all direct our paths, thither let us continually aspire; saying, as he does in another place, (to which I shall adde the words of another great man,)

Macarius
Homil. 4.

O how ineffable are the promises of Christians, who have such glorious expectations, that the Faith and riches of one single Soul cannot be equalled by the glory and beauty of

of heaven and earth; though we take in all their furniture, and treasures, and variety, and goodness, and bravery! And yet how fairly do these things shine in our eyes? and with what pleasure do we behold their beauty? If then the created life be so good, how good is that Life which creates! Anselm.
in Protolog.

If the salvation we receive be so pleasant, how sweet is that Salvation which gives all Salvation! If that wisdom be so lovely which understands the works of God, how lovely is that Wisdom which of nothing contrived them all! Finally, if there be so many and so great delights in delectable things, what and how great is that Delight which is in him that made all things delectable! He that shall enjoy this Good, what shall he have? what shall he not have? He shall have what he will, and what he would not he shall not have. If honour and riches be desired, God will make his good and faithful servants rulers over many things. Nay they shall be called Sons of God, and Gods; and where his Son is, there they shall be, heirs of God, and coheirs with Christ. If they desire true security, there is none like that: for certainly, they shall be as certain that these, or rather this Good shall never by any means be wanting to them, as they are certain they shall

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never leave it of themselves ; nor God their Lover ever take it away against the will of those he loves ; nor any thing stronger then He be able to separate them and God. They shall rejoyce therefore perpetually. And they shall rejoyce as much as they love ; and love as much as they know. And how much, O Lord, shall they know thee then ! how much shall they love thee ! Certainly neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entred into the heart of man in this life, how much they shall know thee, and how much they shall love thee in that. I beseech thee, O God, let me know thee, let me love thee, that I may rejoyce in thee. And if I cannot do it to the full in this life, O that I may profit every day, untill it come to the full ! Let thy Knowledge grow in me here, and there be made full : let thy Love increase, and there also be full : that here my Joy may in hope be great, and there in possession full. Amen.

CHAP. IV.

*Of the ETERNITY
of this LIFE.*

FROM this larger (then was at first designed) consideration of the nature of this LIFE, pass we now to a short Meditation of the ETERNITY of it ; which indeed is the Crown that God sets upon its head, the Circle, if I may so speak, which wreathing it self about this Happiness, makes it to be our sovereign Good. And it may not be unworthy our observation, that this *Eternity* of Life is as far above the continuance of all other blessings heretofore promised, as the *Life* it self is. LIFE among the *Jews*, according to the letter of their Law, signifying onely all earthly good things, there was onely a *long* life, not an *eternall*, in the land of *Canaan*, promised to them that kept that Law. But quite otherwise, the LIFE promised by *Christ* consisting onely in the enjoyment of spirituell and heavenly

blessings, it is not a *long*, but an *eternall*, never-ending life, in the possession of these good things, which he hath assured to us. It being but fit, that as the Life exceeds that which *Moses* promised; so the duration of it also should as much out-run his, as *for ever* extends it self beyond an *Age*.

Now the word ETERNALL may be conceived to comprehend in it these *Three* things.

I.

First, that there is nothing but LIFE in this state of Blessedness; which shall not be interrupted by any dolefull accident. *Life* and *Death*, I told you, in the holy language signifie the same with *Blessedness* and *Misery*: And therefore the *Eternity* of life must include in its notion a state of pure happiness, of mere and unmixed pleasure; without any thing that deserves the name of *Death* to give it the least annoyance. There we may hope to be so happy, as to know without mistake, and to be wise without folly, and to increase in knowledge without our present toil to acquire it. Love

is there without hatred, jealousy or envy, joy without any sighing or sorrow, praises without complaints, obedience without reluctance, speed and alacrity without dulness and heaviness ; in one word, perfect purity and holiness, without spot or blemish to sully the glory of it. As this lower region of the air we see is the place of clouds and darkness, thunder and lightning, storm and tempest ; but to the dwellings of the Sun and fixed Stars none of these pitchy vapours ascend, to obscure their brightness, or trouble their peace : just so is *this* World the scene of misery and vexation, confusion and disorder, our bodies are tossed with severall storms, and our Souls many times hurried with more violent tempests, the fierce gusts of their own passions ; but when we ascend to the region of Light, and are cloathed with the Sun, we shall be out of the reach of these troubles, and find our selves in a state of perfect rest and joy, without the least disgust to abate our contentment.

And what will make us despise this *Valley* of tears, if this blessed hope have not force enough to lift our hearts above it ? Who would not desire to come to

the Mount of *Vison* and *Transfiguration*, where we shall SEE THE LORD, and be so changed thereby, as to be made impassible as he is? Let the Readers pardon me, if I so far digress as to ask them, What is this Wilderness wherein you live, that you should love it better then that heavenly *Canaan*? What is *forty* years, or perhaps *seventy*, of toil and labour, to that *Eternall* Rest which *Christ* hath promised? Are not these husks contemptible in respect of the *Manna*, the *Bread of life*, of which if a man eat he shall live for ever? Is not our life here a dream, a shaddow of life, in comparison with this Life that is everlasting? Why then are you so hardly perswaded to take off your thoughts and affections from things beneath, and not so much to handle the thorns and prickles that are in all mortall things? Why should we be at so much pains to draw you into this Paradise, where, as there is a perpetuall Spring, so, all joy flourishes without the least sense of grief to spoil its pleasures? If you would have us to account you men, we cannot but expect you should entertain this Happiness; unless you can either disbelieve it, or prove it falls so short of this description, that it is not worth the price

price you must give for it. But how unable you will be to doe the former, shall appear presently, when I have told you farther, how far short this description is of the incomparable excellency of this Life.

II.

For this word ETERNALL added to it, may well denote the LIFE we speak of to be without any *intermission*, as well as without any *intermixture*. As there is no contrary sense of grief in that happy State, so there is no insensibleness of joy. The blessed Soul will never cease to feel its own pleasures, because, as there is no *night* in that heavenly country, so there is no *sleep*; in which we can scarce be said to live. The life we shall lead there will be one continued Act of knowing, loving, rejoycing, praising and obeying God; and there will be no void spaces wherein we shall doe nothing, or wherein we shall doe something else. We cannot conceive how any drowziness should creep upon us, or heaviness oppress our spirits: and as for other actions besides those now named, what should there be, since all evill is banished, all sin shut out of that Paradise?

As for all Good works, there will be none of those, wherein we are now employed, to exercise our Obedience; as not befitting the Nobleness of that state, wherein neither we nor others shall be in any need of those things, which now call for our *Charity* to them, or *Justice* to our selves. What shall works of Mercy doe in that world, where there is no Misery? How shall we visit the sick, where immortality and incorruption provides for a continuall health? What hospitality shall we use there, where no poor inhabit nor strangers come? How shall we cloath the naked, where they are invested with a robe of the purest and most unspotted light? What Enemies shall we study to reconcile, where universall Friendship reigns? What differences shall we compose, where all live in unity and harmonious love? And if these works of *Mercy* shall be useless, surely then all works of *Necessity*, as they are termed, will be superfluous. There will be no meat, no drink, no apparell or habitation to be cared for, where there is no hunger, thirst, and cold, or such like wants, which now continually pinch us. The onely work will be, to think of God, to love him whose love will appear so wonderfull, to rejoyce in him,

him, to reckon up his benefits, to thank him for them, to perform him such services as are suitable to the dignity of that condition, to love all the blessed society, who will contribute all they can to each other's happiness. And how incomparably great will that happiness be, when we shall have no other employment but to be happy?

There are two great defects (as a famous Divine of our own hath observed) which spoil the intireness of all our delights here; but will find no place in the enjoyments of that happy state. For (1.) all the Capacities we have now are so narrow and weak, that we cannot long bear any high pleasure: but we are soon satiated with it, and are fain, even for our own ease, to lay it aside, and seek some new delight. This makes our best contentments not to be pure and sincere, without the mixture of some dregs; for of other this fleshly state will not admit. And besides this, (2.) while we study the satisfaction of one Capacity, another must be content to go without the pleasure that it desires. They cannot all be gratified together, but the rest must wait till one hath done. And, which is worse,
while

while we fulfill the desires of the lower Faculties, the nobler commonly are deprived of their satisfaction. They that are given to their appetite, and are great purveyors for the grosser senses of the body, not onely defraud the Mind, but even the purer senses, (the Eye and the Ear,) which are the great Gates of wisdom, of their most delightfull enjoyments. Nay, such is the imperfection of this state, that the Mind it self cannot earnestly fix in one sort of studies, but commonly it is render'd thereby very unapt to reap the delight that other parts of knowledge afford. We have seen deep Contemplators in severall Sciences, prove too unskilfull in matters of common prudence: and others strangely quick in worldly business, to which they have bent their minds, who have been extreme inapprehensive of Divine Mysteries. But in the life to come it will be quite otherwise; for our Capacities, as I have discoursed in the foregoing Chapters, will be there mightily improved; and so enlarged and widened, that we shall be in no danger to take a surfeit of the fullest enjoyments that can present themselves unto us. And such will be the friendly agreement and sweet harmony between the capacities and desires
of

of every faculty there, that the satisfaction of one can no way turn to the prejudice of any other ; but rather further and set forward its true delight and contentment. For then, the more we know, the more we shall love ; and the more we love, the more we shall know how good God is. And this we shall doe without any weariness, which now forces us to break off our sweetest enjoyments ; because then we shall not spend, but rather improve, our selves by exercise and motion.

Which makes another considerable difference between this state and that which we expect. All our pleasures here, as you may clearly discern from what hath been said, consisting in a vehement motion, which is very transient, and quickly slips away ; we must rest a while before we can renew it, and begin the motion again. The duration of the present is short ; but there are long pauses made before another succeeds. For no man can always eat and drink, or every moment enjoy any other delight : much less can he always attend to what he enjoys, though the attention is that which makes the delight. But now, quite contrary,
this

this pleasure that flows from the Vision of God is of such a nature, that it is always felt and enjoy'd. For being firm and steady, fixt and unchangeable, like God himself, it is not received by piece-meal and at certain seasons, as our pleasures here are; but is full and all together, without any space between to disjoyn its parts. Which makes those happy souls live in one continued compleat happiness and joy, which doth not pass away, but still remains. They can always love him, always praise him, always feel a sense of his goodness trickling down their hearts, and filling them with ineffable joys without any ceasing.

Who would not then by a short course of Piety here, which must be oft interrupted by sleep and other necessary occasions, (and it is well if not by many failings,) run towards this never-discontinued life of happiness in the other world? Who would not wish and strive to enjoy such a Good as will never suffer him to be out of enjoyment? None, sure, but they who, though they cannot always eat and drink and take their pleasure, yet have their hearts so sunk into such delights, that they cannot receive any
taste

taste of these celestiall entertainments. Do but spend a serious and stedfast thought upon them, do but give your selves a true gust of them; and you will sooner cease to eat and drink, then to hunger and thirst after them.

III.

For this word ETERNALL, you will soon see, in the most obvious acception of it, denotes the perpetuity and everlasting duration of this *uninterrupted* and *unintermitted* LIFE, or state of highest Happiness. If we should suppose it to be but of a short continuance, yet such is the pleasure of it, I have shewn you, so satisfying are its joys, that any man of sense would chuse rather to spend *seventy* or *eighty* years there, then to pass them in this miserable world. Nay, *one* day of that life is better then a *thousand* of ours: and much rather should we wish to have the meanest place in those celestiall mansions, then the greatest preferments on this Earth. But besides that it is so transcendently sweet and delicious, you must now consider, that this LIFE knows no term nor period; but lasts as long as him that is the Authour of it. *He never began*

to be the Lord and to be Good, (as Clemens Alex. concludes his V. Book,) being alway what he is : ἐστὶ μὲν πάντοτε ὁ αὐτός, nor will he ever cease to doe good, though he bring all things to an end. Still holy Souls will enjoy the sweet fruits of his love, when all things here wither and perish. He is the Eternall, God blessed for ever, from everlasting to everlasting, and changes not. And such will the state of happiness be to which our Lord will bring his servants: to a Crown of glory that fadeth not away; to a building of God not made with hands, eternall in the heavens; to a kingdom that cannot be shaken; to a light that is never sullied with any cloud, and can never be put out; to a splendour and glory that is neither eclipsed nor ever impaired; for it is the Glory of God, the enjoyment of his eternall brightness: which as it is not broken by sleep, nor interrupted for a time by any of our earthly employments; so much less shall it break off by death, and cease to be for ever.

1 Pet. v. 4.

2 Cor. v. 1.

xii. Heb.
28.

This is the very Crown, as I said at the beginning, and the perfection of the Happiness we expect. This makes it to be absolute Bliss; because it wants not
that

that continuance which all our enjoyments here desire, but still complain they cannot have. Which some anciently thought they saw most lively represented in the History of the Creation of the World: where there is a constant mention, as the *Hebrews* observe, of the evening and the morning making one day, till the whole six days-work was ended. *Pirke R. Eliezer c. 18.*
The evening and the morning were the first day, saith the Text, i. Gen. 5. And the evening and the morning were the second day, vers. 8. And so you read of all the other six, till you come to the seventh: wherein God ended the work which he had made, and rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. ii. Genes. 2. But it is not said here, as it is in the conclusion of all the former days, that *the evening and the morning were the seventh day.* And therefore they lookt upon the Six days as a *Calendar* of the severall Ages of this World, in which there is a continuall vicissitude of day and night, of light and darknes, pleasure and grief, labour and rest, and one generation goes that another may come, till all have an end. But the *Seventh day*, in which they found no mention of evening and morning, they took to be an emblem

L. vi. con-
tra Gell.
p. 317.

emblem of that happy *Sabbath* and perfect repose we shall have in the other Life; when, as *Origen* speaks, *we have done all our work faithfully, and left nothing undone.* After this, says he, follows *the day of God's Sabbath and Rest*, *ἐν ᾗ ἐωρετάμεθα ἀμα πρὸς Θεῷ*, &c. in which all pious Souls, that have finished their work, as God did his, *ascending up to the Spectacle above, and the generall assembly of the just and blessed, shall feast together with God*, and keep his everlasting Sabbath of joy and gladness and peace, without any succeeding sadness and sorrow, or any conclusion of their happy enjoyments.

Of which also the happy condition of the *Hebrews*, after they came out of their *Egyptian* bondage, was some kind of figure: for it is called by the name of a *Sabbath* or *Rest* which God gave them from their hard labours; and when they come thither, they are said to come to their *rest*. In like manner the Apostle, speaking of the Christian Happiness, calls it by the same name, and proves that there still remains another *Rest for the people of God*. iv. *Heb.* 9. And the Spirit it self saith, xiv. *Rev.* 13. *Blessed are the dead which*

which die in the Lord, that they may rest from their labours.

There is nothing we can enjoy in this life, but, besides that it is short, we must attain that short enjoyment by much labour. We must not have it with perfect ease, but with toil and pains and the sweat of our brows. Or if it come at a cheaper rate, yet it will stand us in a great many thoughts, and be paid for with much care and solicitude afterward to preserve our contentments; which else will be in danger to be lost, and leave us the more miserable. There will be many also that envy to us our happiness: and others perhaps that will endeavour to oppress us, and deprive us of it. And if we can escape all these troubles, yet we must have a sore conflict with our selves and our spirituall enemies: which will put us to great pains to keep our selves from being corrupted with the delights of this world, or poisoned and infected with the evill examples that are round about us. Therefore this present time may well be called the *time of our labours*: after all which there is nothing we have got but must also have an end,

and we shall be forced quickly to take our leave of it.

But now, in that joyfull *Sabbath* that is to succeed, we shall rest from all these labours, and be at no more pains to attain or keep our happiness. There will be no danger, as I have said, of our being despoiled of it. No Serpent can creep into that Paradise, to tempt and allure us from that great felicity: nor shall we be in any danger from our own Flesh; nor find our selves in a World where there will be any thing to excite our desires, but what we may freely take the fullest satisfaction in. By which, and all the rest that hath been discoursed, you may clearly see, there can be nothing wanting to compleat the happiness of that state, but onely the never-ceasing duration or continuance of it. Now in this, as was said at first, the Rest we expect in the other world differs from that which God promised the *Hebrews* in the land of *Canaan*. For by virtue of *Moses* his Law they had a title onely to a long life in that fruitfull Country: in opposition to which, as well as to our short life here, the Christian Rest is called an ever-
lasting

lasting Life, an inheritance immortall (because incorruptible) and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us. 1 Pet. i. 4. So our Lord himself calls it a great number of times in one discourse he had with the stupid Jews, Job. vi. where he exhorts them to labour not so much for the meat that perisheth, as for the meat that endureth to everlasting life, which the Son of man came to give them, ver. 27. For this is the will, he tells them, of him that sent him, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, ver. 40. And because they were still sottishly regardless of what he said, he affirms it again with the most vehement asseverations, ver. 47. Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. And 58. He that eateth of this Bread shall live for ever: which is repeated again in sundry other places of the same Chapter.

And I must tell you, for your more ample satisfaction, that our Saviour hath taken care to deliver this Doctrine to us in such words as can have no other sense or meaning. The word *for ever* or *everlasting* in the Old Law sometime signifies onely the duration of severall years, or a

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long compass of time, which at last might have an end. As the *Hebrew* servant who had sold himself for six years, if when they were at an end he chose not to go free, he was *to serve his master for ever*: xxi. *Exod.* 6. that is, till the *Jubilee*, if his master lived so long, and he were not redeemed nor released. And there are many Ordinances of *Moses*, not now to be enumerated, which are said to be everlasting, because they were to continue till the coming of *Christ*. Now lest any one should imagine, that the Life our Saviour speaks of shall be *everlasting* onely in the same sense, a very long continued happiness, (severall Ages suppose,) which in conclusion might determine and come to an end; he hath prevented such thoughts, by using other words besides this of *everlasting life*, that we may be assured it signifies more in the Gospel then it did under the Law, that is, an Endless Bliss. For (1.) he not onely tells the *Jews* in the forenamed Chapter, vi. *Joh.* 50. that he was the bread of which if a man did eat he should *not die*: but that *whosoever liveth* (that is, every living man) *and believeth in him, shall never die*; xi. *Joh.* 26. Which is as much as to say, He will give us a Life

Life without any death. And farther (2.) he says, that whosoever keeps his saying, shall *never see death*: viii. 51. Which, if it signifie any thing distinct from the former, must denote that he shall never be in any danger of death, or come near it: which, in the next words, vers. 52. is called *tasting death*. How can this be, say the Jews, since *Abraham and the Prophets are dead*; and thou sayest, if a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death? That's the phrase wherein our Saviour's Passion is expressed, *who tasted death* (i. e. lay in the grave a while) for every man, ii. Heb. 9. And therefore may signifie here, that our Saviour's faithfull Disciples, after he hath given them everlasting life, shall not die at all; no, not for the space of three days, though afterward they might rise again. But I have taken notice of one expression fuller then this; for he doth not onely say that they shall not die nor taste of death, but (3.) that they cannot die any more. xx. Luk. 36. *ὁ γὰρ ζῶν καὶ ἀθάνατος ἐν δόξῃ αἰῶνος*. There is no possibility, after they have attained that life, that they should die again; for they are equall to the Angels, and are the children of God, being by the Resurrection begotten to an immortall life.

Hence it is that the Apostle calls this happy state by the name of *Ἀθάνατος* immortality, 2 Tim. i. 10. and *Ἀφθαρσία* incorruption, ii. Rom. 7. and saith that our bodies shall be raised *in incorruption*, 1 Cor. xv. 42. and *put on immortality*, ver. 53. and *bear the image of the heavenly Adam*, i. e. of our Lord now he is in glory, who we know dies no more, ver. 49. Which all signifie the Body as well as the Soul shall enjoy such a solid state of happiness as cannot moulder or be dissolved; but will remain firm and durable like the Authour of it, by whom *death shall be swallowed up in victory*, ver. 54. i. e. be so perfectly conquered, that it shall never recover the least power any more.

Innumerable Ages shall never put a period to this ETERNALL LIFE; but after they are all past, the whole Man shall be as fresh and beautifull, without any declension or sign of decay, as if it were but newly risen, and had just then put on its purest robes of glorious Light. There will be as full a Good, I mean, and as great a strength to enjoy it, and as perfect a liking also of it, after millions of ages are spent in the heavenly mansions, as there was at the very first entrance
into

into them. Death being destroyed by him who is the Resurrection and the Life, and who dieth no more; an immortal Soul shall inhabit an immortal Body, and they shall be *for ever with the Lord*. Where they shall be for ever employed in those happy exercises before mentioned; which will for ever be to be done again. In the doing of them there will be infinite pleasure; and in the repetition of them there will be no disrelish, but an infinite increase of pleasure. As they always know, so they shall always be knowing more. For new beauties, we may well think, will discover themselves in an infinite object; and this will excite a fresh love, and that a more vigorous joy: And so for ever round again there will be knowing, loving and rejoycing more and more without any end.

It is but a little that can be said of ETERNITY, though we should speak of it to the end of *Time*. Nay, in *Eternity* it self we shall not be able to come to the End of it in our thoughts, no more then in our being; because it hath none. We can never know it all, because it is still to come. And therefore how little

of it will this leaf of paper contain? or should we write never so much, how shall we be able now to reach the description of a thing so sublime? Thankfull acclamations to the goodness of our Saviour for bringing life and immortality to light, and serious admirations at the amazing greatness of what we know of it, will be far more acceptable, as well as more easie, then a long discourse about it. And therefore I shall end this Chapter with my wishes, that this Blessedness I am speaking of may not seem small in our eyes, because we can relate so little of it; but rather appear the greater and the more desirable, because we see it is beyond our present understanding. Though this vast Circle of Eternity cannot be measured by our thoughts; that makes it but so much the more excellent then our Span of time. And though this LIFE comprehend such pleasures as we cannot now enjoy; that doth but exalt it above the poor pleasures of this present life, which we can first enjoy, and then contemn. We are not able, it is true, to conceive, nor can it enter into our hearts, what God hath in store for those that love him: but this should onely excite our longings to conceive it; and

and make us sigh and say, when we think of enjoying God himself, and of an eternall enjoyment of him,

O the fulness of God ! O the infiniteness of him that is the Life of this LIFE ! Who can tell what thou art, O most Blessed for ever ; by whom all things were made, and who art All that can possibly be ? What comforts shine from the brightness of thy face ? How joyfull wilt thou make us with the light of thy countenance, when we shall see thee as thou art ? It will put greater gladness into our hearts, then if all the glory of the world should smile upon us.

But what eye can be strong enough to behold so great a Splendour ? what excellent creatures must they be made, who shall be capable to SEE GOD ? It casts us into a trance, when we do but think of being eternally beloved of thee. O what will it doe to feel our selves ever, ever, the objects of thy infinite love ? The beauteous frame of the Heavens is exceeding admirable in our eyes. O what a goodly World is this, in which thou suffereest thine Enemies to live ! What a glorious torch is the Sun, which thou hast lighted to shine on the unjust as well as on the just ! Who then can hope to know,

know, till he sees, what the pleasures are which thou hast prepared for thy Friends? what a glorious Light shall shine from thy presence, upon the face of those that love thee? Their hearts now cannot hold the smallest glimpse of that which shall for ever bless and ravish them with its joys. But how can we hope to see it, unless thou wilt raise us above our selves; and make us no longer men of this world, but children of the Resurrection, and equall to the holy Angels? We believe, and rejoyce to think, that thou wilt account us worthy to obtain that World, and the resurrection of the dead. It is the greatest pleasure we have here, to hope we shall enjoy all the happineſs of which we now discourse: nay, far more, infinitely more then can be conceived.

August. de
Civ. Dei
cap. ult.

For how great will that happineſs be, where we shall neither feel any evill, nor want any good? where all our work will be the praises of God, who shall be all in all? where no sloth shall make us cease to praise him, nor any necessity call us to other employment? There will be true glory indeed, where no man shall be praised, either by the error or the flattery of him that praiseth. True honour that will be, which shall be denied to no worthy person, nor given to any
unwor-

unworthy. Nay, the unworthy shall not so much as seek it there, where none are permitted to come but such as are worthy. True peace is there, where nothing shall fall cross to our desires, either from our selves or any other. There He who gave Vertue, will be its Reward; having promised that he himself, then which nothing can be greater, nothing better, will be the portion of it. What else shall we understand by those words, I will be their God, and they my people; but that I will be their Satisfaction, I will be all that every one can honestly desire, both life, and health, and sustenance, and riches, and glory, and honour, and all good? For so we reade, that God will be all in all. He will be the End of our desires, who will be seen without end, and loved without lothing, and praised without weariness. This will be the office, this will be the inclination, this will be the work of all in that Eternall Life, which is common to all. There we shall sing the mercies of the Lord for ever. There we shall keep that truly greatest Sabbath, which hath no Evening. There we shall rest from labour and see, we shall see and love, we shall love and praise. Behold what will be in the End without end. For what else is our End, but to come to the Kingdom which hath no End? Amen.

The following is a list of the names of the persons who have been elected to the office of Justice of the Peace for the year 1900:

CHAP. V.

*Of the Certainty of this E-
TERNALL LIFE,
whose Excellency is a little
farther illustrated out of the
Holy Scriptures.*

WHEN I reflect upon the foregoing Meditations concerning the LIFE to come, and the ETERNITY of it, I begin to think I have wrong'd it much, by so poor and dull a description of so great a Good; and by endeavouring to draw that into a few particular considerations, which hath in it innumerable perfections. It had been more becoming our ignorance, perhaps, to have admired its fulness, then to undertake to search how full it is. Alas! what shallow brains have we to contain a wide and deep Ocean? what weak eyes, to look stedfastly upon the most glorious Light of heaven? How much too short and narrow are our thoughts, to compass an Eternall duration? When we
have

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have done all we can, the best way, I think, to our satisfaction will be, to have recourse to a passage from the mouth of God himself, wherein we must rest our selves contented. It is in the *xxi. Rev. 7.* where *St. John* was told by him who sat upon the throne, (*ver. 5.*) that *He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my Son.*

A most marvellously-large Conveyance is here delivered to us from him, who hath all that can be in his possession. The Great Lord of Heaven and Earth makes us a grant in these words so exceeding full, that we cannot desire it should run in more comprehensive terms. For by this promise (1.) He makes over to us *ALL things*, Heart cannot wish more to make us compleatly happy, then he settles upon us; for there is no good thing that he will withhold from those that stedfastly adhere to him. And observe (2.) the tenure wherein we shall hold these vast and large possessions, which is as an *Inheritance*. We have an everlasting perpetuall estate made us in *all things*. The terms of this writing are such as if it had run in these words, *By an eternall indefeasible right he shall possess all blessings.*
For

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For Inheritances, it is well known, among the *Hebrews* never failed, nor went out of the family. They could not be so alienated by sale or gift, but they returned in the year of *Jubilee* to their first owner or his posterity. Which makes the word *INHERIT*, in the holy language, to signify the enjoyment of a purchase or possession out of which the inheritour can never be thrown, and which he cannot quit, but shall remain settled in him to perpetuity. This *St. Paul* calls the riches of the *GLORY* of his inheritance, i. *Eph.* 18. to signify, that our celestially Patrimony is not onely exceeding large and firmly settled on us; but also most noble, and brings along with it everlasting honour and renown. Which is more fully explained, you may note (3.) and the reason of it given, in the next words, *I will be GOD to him.* I will confer, that is, such benefits on him, as are fit for the bounty of the omnipotent Goodness to bestow. Look what He was to *Abraham* in this world, (to whom he promised to be a God, xvii. *Gen.* 7.) that he will be to us eternally: In blessing he will bless us, and be our exceeding great reward.

The

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* in *Psal.*
xiv. 1.

The word *God*, GOD, answers to the *Hebrew* word *Elohim*; which doth not respect the *Essence* of the Almighty, but his *Providence*, as * *Genebrard* among others hath well observed: and signifies as much as the Judge, the Moderatour and Governour of the World, (from whence it is that Judges, Magistrates and Rulers are called by this name,) to whom it belongs to give rewards and punishments. And accordingly the *Hebrew* writers observe, that it is never said the Lord will be the God of any persons, but when he expresses some singularly-great kindness, and stands in a speciall relation of love to them. In particular *Abarbinell* notes (upon *Deut. vi.*) that he is never called the God of *Israel*, till he had brought them in a wonderfull manner out of the land of *Egypt*, the house of bondage. I find, indeed, that he promised to be their God before, when he told *Abraham*, that he would give him and his seed the land of *Canaan* for an everlasting possession. xvii. *Gen. 8.* But he did not begin to be so, till he began to lead them thither; and, intoken of their being his, they had kept the *Passover*, and received his Law from Mount *Sinai*. Before this *Moses* says, *We were bondmen in Egypt, and the LORD*
brought

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brought us out with a mighty hand : vi. Deuter. 21. And the LORD shewed signs and wonders great and sore upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh and upon all his household, before our eyes : ver. 22. He doth not say in all these words לל אלהינו the LORD our GOD ; but onely , the LORD brought us out, and, the LORD shewed : because he speaks of the time before the giving of the Law, which was the greatest kindness he did them after they came out of Egypt. But as soon as he had made mention of that, (says Abarbinel) in the very next words, ver. 24. he alters his style, and tells them, The LORD commanded us to doe all these statutes, to fear the LORD our GOD, for our good always, &c. And ver. 25. It shall be our righteousness, if we observe to doe all these Commandments, before the LORD our GOD, as he hath commanded us. And so he speaks vii. 1. When the LORD thy GOD shall bring thee into the land, &c. and ver. 2. When the LORD thy GOD shall deliver thee before thee, &c. and ver. 6. Thou art a holy people to the LORD thy GOD ; the LORD thy GOD hath chosen thee to be a speciall people to himself, &c. For from the time of his appearing on mount Sinai and so forward (says that learned Hebrew Writer)

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ter) He was *our God*, because then we took upon us his Divinity.

And I think I may as truly observe, that till the Resurrection of our Lord from the dead, (which compleated that ~~eternal~~ departure which *Moses* and *Elias* discoursed with him about, and said he should accomplish at *Jerusalem*, ix. *Luke* 31.) we never reade that the Father Almighty is called *the God* of those who believe in his Son *Jesus*. Then he demonstrated beyond all contradiction that he was their Saviour and mighty Deliverer, who would rescue them from the bondage of corruption, the fear of death, the power of the grave, and give them immortall life. And therefore then he bids *Mary* go and tell his Disciples, whom he calls Brethren, and say to them, *I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God*. xx. *Joh.* 17. This is the first time he is called *their God*: but ever after there is no language more common. For as St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* call him *the GOD of our Lord Jesus Christ*; (I suppose, because he had raised him from the dead, and highly glorified him for his obedient suffering of death;) so they address themselves to him as particularly related to them,

i. *Eph.* 3,
17. i *Pet.*
i 3.

Chap. 5. Excellency of this L

them, and ready to bestow upon them the like blessedness, saying, *I thank MY GOD always, &c. MY GOD shall supply all your need: We rejoyce before OUR GOD, &c.* as you may reade in many places of *St. Paul's* Epistles. Which shews, that this promise in the *Revelation*, (made after our Saviour's Ascension,) of being *the God* of those who overcome, includes in it the bestowing on us the most excellent benefits. Because he will be our GOD in a more excellent manner then he ever was yet to men: such a GOD as he was to our Blessed Lord himself. He will prefer us to live with him in great splendour and glory. He will give us an inheritance in a better Country, which is an heavenly; where all delights flow, and never cease to spring up to those happy Souls, who shall enjoy the eternall fruits of his greatest love.

i. Rom. 8.
i Cor. i. 4.
iv. Phil.
19. i Thess.
iii. 9.

For so he adds, (4.) *and he shall be to me a Son.* A Son, you know, expects the Inheritance of his Father; because to him it properly belongs, and upon him it descends: And therefore to be to GOD a Son, is to be made like him, and to live with him in that very happiness and bliss which he enjoys. So *St. Paul* expresses it,

be Certainty, and farther Part II.

viii. *Rom. 17.* he shall be *an heir of GOD,* a co-heir with *Jesus*, who as the Son of God inherits his Glory. He shall participate, that is, with God in his everlasting life, kingdom, honour and joy: which what it is we are not able to tell, no more then we can comprehend what his Majesty is who possesse heaven and earth, and is infinite in all perfections. But we have the greatest reason that can be to expect so great a bliss, because we know that *God loves his Son Jesus, and hath given ALL THINGS into his hand.* iii. *Joh. 35.* We are sure that *God hath made him most blessed for ever; He hath made him exceeding glad with his countenance. Honour and Majesty hath he laid upon him, and his glory is great in his Salvation.* xxi. *Psal. 5, 6.*

Now it is most evident, you may again observe (5.) that the generall intendment of this promise is, to put us in hope of being made like to *Christ* our Elder Brother. For he is not ashamed to call us by that name. And this being his great Prerogative, that he is *Heir of all things*; when the Father of mercy assures us that we shall *inherit all things*, it is as much as to say, we shall share with *Christ* in his large possessions. It is easy
to

to note, how the Holy Gospell describes our expected felicity in the same terms wherein it speaks of that which *Christ* our Head enjoys : with whom St. *Paul* says we shall *appear in glory*, and *reign with him*, and have a *glorious body* like his, and in order to it be *caught up in the clouds*, (*1 Thess. iv. 17.*) which was the manner of his ascension to heaven, *i. Act. 9.* And accordingly here God promises to him that overcomes, that he shall *inherit all things* ; in conformity still with our Saviour, *whom he hath appointed heir of all things. i. Heb. 2.*

I cannot say there is any allusion in these words to the *Olympick* rewards, given to the Conquerours in those Combats: but so it is, that they who overcame there were accounted *ισοθις* equall to their Gods ; that is, their Hero's or deified men : and therefore had Statues erected to their honour, and an annuall Pension settled on them for their more noble maintenance. But what was this to the reall Divine honour and glory which God will give to victorious Souls ? To whom he promises not a small Pension or Annuity ; but an *inheritance*, and that of *all things* : *i. e.* to shine in the glory of our Blessed Saviour ; who is King of kings and

Fabri Agonist. L. ii. c. 11. 16, 17.

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Lord of lords, and can prefer all his Subjects to such a greatness, that they shall be more like Gods than men. So St. Greg. Nazianzen often speaks, that * *we shall be made Gods in the other World, by him that was made Man for us in this.* It is hard to tell what *Heraclitus* meant by that speech recorded in *Clemens Alexandrinus* *, ἀνθρώποι Θεοί, Θεοὶ ἀνθρώποι. *Men are Gods, Gods are men*: But it is verified in the Christian Religion, which reveals a Divine state, to which we shall ascend when we leave the earth, by him who came down from Heaven into a vile condition, that he might promote us thither.

* Orat.
xxxvi.
p. 592.

* L. iii.
Pedag.
c. I.

Let us study then these words very hard, and think often what it is to have ALL THINGS that the love of the Almighty will bestow, when, in the most eminent sense and in another World, he shall become OUR GOD: and what it is to have an estate in him that can never be cut off, but remains as firm as the Throne on which he sat when he spake these words. And then, if you believe in him, it will fill you with unspeakable joy, (without entering into particular enquiries,) to think that you shall be
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so happy as to be his *Sons* and *Heirs*, who want nothing that can be desired, or he can give. And indeed these other words, **ETERNALL LIFE**, wherein God's gracious promise commonly runs, are of the same import and force with those now mentioned. All that we hope for is contained in them. As (1.) *Pardon of Sin*: without which we cannot take one step toward so great a bliss. For death, the fruit and punishment of sin, will still remain, unless sin be pardoned: and then what hope can we have of life, much less of Eternall life? which is therefore perhaps called by the name of *Righteousness*, v. *Gal.* 5. because it includes our perfect justification and absolution from the guilt of sin, without which we could not attain it. And (2.) it supposes the *Adoption of Sons*; which is begun in this life, but not perfected till the next: when we shall be made the children of God by receiving a new life from him at the Resurrection of the dead. And (3.) the *Redemption of the Body* is another blessing included in it. For being raised again, it will be freed from its present weaknesses, alterations and pains, to which it is obnoxious; and stand in need of not so much as food

and raiment. And therefore the time when he will bestow it is called the *day of our Redemption*, iv. *Eph.* 30. To which must be added (4.) the *carrying of it up to heaven, to meet the Lord*: For being raised a spirituall body, it will not be fit for this World, but for the other. Where (5.) we shall *rest with him* in the celestiall Inheritance, and enjoy all the happiness it affords: for LIFE, you have heard, signifies all good things. And (lastly) the *Perpetuity* of them is plainly expressed in the word ETERNALL; which makes the happiness of this heavenly LIFE appear so exceeding great, that our present Life, compared to it, is (as *Censorinus* says of Time in regard of Eternity) no more then a Winter's day.

Let this then suffice us to know, that we shall have a perfect enjoyment of all the Good we are capable to receive, when we are made greater then we are, by the change that shall be wrought in us at our departure hence, and at the resurrection of the dead. And let our pains be more imployed to know the truth and certainty of this, then to know what the Good is we shall enjoy; which

which will be best known by possessing it.

And herein now we may admire the Goodness of God, and see how liberall he is of his bounties, where we are capable to receive them. Though he hath said little to make us particularly understand the LIFE of the next world; yet he hath said very much to assure us that there is such an happy Life. Where we can understand and comprehend his mind, there he fully expresseth himself; and therefore where he is more silent, it is (no doubt) because, should he speak of such matters, we cannot understand him. We are able to conceive any thing that he shall declare for the reason of our hope, and the ground of our faith; and it highly concerns us to be very well satisfied in the foundation of such expectations in a future World. And therefore herein our gracious God hath not been sparing to reveal himself; but hath granted us the strongest Evidences for our claim to such an *Inheritance*. Which makes me conclude that, if we were as capable to receive instruction concerning the *Inheritance* it self, and to have a *Terrier* (as I may call it) or particular description

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scription of that heavenly Country, of the manner of their Life, and all the fruits growing there, delivered to us ; He that hath been so large in the assurances he hath given us, would not have denied us also this satisfaction. Well therefore it is for us, that this is the onely reason why we want it, and know not *what we shall be* ; because we cannot, till we be changed, be made partakers of so great a knowledge. And well is it for us, that we have also so good a cause to think that this is the onely reason ; because God hath manifested himself so fully to us in other things that belong to our happiness, by giving us the most firm grounds whereon to build our future hopes.

This is the thing which this present Treatise chiefly intends, to shew, as God himself speaks concerning the promises of the New *Jerusalem* xxi. *Rev. 5.* that *these Words are faithfull and true.* There is no couzenage or deceit in these promises, no fraud or collusion in the drawing them up ; nor any alteration in God's mind since they were made, and he hath set such seals to them : But I may say, as he there doth to St. *John*, who it's possible might doubt of what the Angel had shewn

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shewn him, *Behold*, (or, as *Andreas Cæsariensis* reads it,) *Idè, idè, Behold, behold, I make all things new*. See here and observe; I my self, who sit upon my Throne, assure thee of the Certainty of these Visions: If thou wilt take my word, I here pass it to thee, that I will fulfill all these promises. Such, I say, is the unquestionable credit of the *Words of ETERNALL LIFE*. God himself hath spoken them; He hath bid us believe them; yea, he hath said, we must account him a liar, if we do not rely upon them: For *this*, saith St. *John*, is the Record, that God hath given us eternall Life, and this Life is in his Son.

Before I come to a particular examination of all that hath been said and done to verify this, let me note these *two* things, *First*, that the Apostle saith, we have a RECORD of this truth; which is attested from the mouth of severall infallible Witnesses, who have deposed what they saw and heard about it, to the satisfaction of all those that will consider their testimony. There being such a RECORD, that is, that *Jesus is the Son of GOD*, we have no reason to doubt of the *Eternall Life* he promises: but upon the very same grounds that we believe
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the one, we ought to believe the other. If the *Father*, the *Word*, the *Holy Ghost*, and all the other *Witnesses*, have proved the former by undeniable testimonies; then at the same time they proved this also, that we shall *live by him*.

For (1.) it is evident that, if *Jesus* was the *Son of God*, sent by him in a special manner into the world, to act in his stead; we are to believe all that he says of himself, or that others by his commission and authority have declared him to be. Now if we look into his Gospel, we shall find that he most earnestly affirms himself to *have been before Abraham was*; viii. *Joh.* 58. and to have had a *Glory with God before the world was*; xvii. 5. and to be so *one with the Father, that the Father was in him, and he in the Father*: x. 30, 38. And they who were his inspired *Witnesses*, whom he said *he would send as the Father sent him*, xx. 21. and who were filled by him with the *Holy Ghost*, declared him to be *God's WORD*, who *in the beginning was with God, and was GOD*; i. *Joh.* 1, 2. *the image of the invisible God, the brightness of his glory, and the character of his person; who in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth,*

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earth, and the heavens were the works of his hands. i. Col. 15. i. Heb. 3, 10. From all which we may certainly conclude, that he is not onely the *Son of God* in regard of his Authority, but by Nature; *begotten of him before all worlds, of one substance with the Father.* And therefore

We may be confident, (2.) that he being thus nearly related to God, must needs know his mind, and be acquainted with his most secret purposes and resolutions: To which he was so privy, that he says he *was then in heaven*, when he was come down to reveal them to men. iii. *Joh.* 13. So that we may safely look upon the promises he makes us of **ETERNALL LIFE**, as the declarations of God's gracious will and pleasure, which shall undoubtedly be fulfilled. *No man indeed (as St. John speaks, i. 18.) hath seen GOD at any time; the onely-begotten Son, which is in the bosome of the Father, he hath declared him.* For who could dive into God's mind, and tell us what was in his thoughts? What man could enter into his breast, and see what was in his heart to doe for us? None but his onely-begotten Son; who being in his
bosome,

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bosome, and privy to his most secret Counsels, ἐξήγοράσθαι, hath declared or expounded him, i. e. his hidden will and decrees, which else had not been revealed to us. It is the opinion of *Maimonides* in severall parts of his Works *, that when *Moses* prayed God to shew him his Glory, he meant his Essence, of which he desired to have a distinct conception as it is in it self; such as we have of a man when we have seen his face, and by the image of him remaining in our mind can distinguish him from all other men. But there are other of their Learned men, who by his Glory understand the Rewards he will give the pious, and the prosperity he sometimes bestows on the wicked. Whatsoever it was, God told him he could not comprehend it, but must be content with the sight onely of his back parts, not of his face. xxxiii. *Exod. ult.* That is, saith *Maimonides*, with the knowledge of something of his Essence; or, as he elsewhere expounds it *, of his *Works and Attributes*; of which he had such an obscure knowledge as we have of a man whose back parts we have seen, but never beheld his face. To be so intimately acquainted with God and his mind as he wish'd, was the priviledge of
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* *L. de Fund. Legis cap. i. n. 10. More Nev. part. i. c. 37. 54. &c.*

* *More Nev. p. i. c. 21.*

of the *Messiah* alone, who had the clearest and fullest sight of the Glory of the Father, both of his Essence, and his Will, and his gracious intentions towards us : for he is *εἰς τὸν κόλπον* *in the bosome* of the Father, and therefore *sees his face*, as the Scripture speaks; and hath not merely some obscure representations of him, like that of a man when he turns his back to us, but a full view of him in all his perfections, of which he himself is the very Image. And what he saw, he hath by God's express will revealed to us ; and discovered those things which eye never beheld (but were kept secret from the foundation of the world) concerning the glorious rewards which his love will give to all pious persons. For since I have proved that he is *his Son*, we cannot imagine that he presumed to say more than he knew, or told us things out of his own mind onely, (when he spake of ETERNAL LIFE, as he frequently did ;) but *what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth*, as it is iii. *John* 32.

We cannot believe otherwise (3.) when we look upon him as the *Son of God*, but that he must needs speak the very truth to us. As he could not but know

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know the Mind of God, if he was so one with him; so he could not but speak to us according to what he knew of his Mind. For as the Father is Truth, so is the Son; because he is perfectly the same with the Father. *We worship the Father of Truth, and the Son the Truth; who are two in person, but one in consent, and agreement, and identity of will:* as Origen * speaks explaining those words of our Saviour, *I and the Father are one;* x. *Joh. 30.* and, *I am the Truth:* xiv. 6. We may be confident that the words of both are equally faithfull and true. So God the Father bad St. John write of his own sayings, as I observed before, xxi. *Rev. 5.* And in the same style our Saviour commands him to write of himself, *These things saith the Amen, the faithfull and true witness.* iii. *Rev. 14.* John Baptist had said as much before, iii. *Joh. 34.* *He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God.* To which the words of our Saviour, in another place of that Gospell, perfectly accord, xii. 49, 50. *I have not spoken of my self; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is EVER-LASTING LIFE: whatsoever I*
speake

* L. viii.
 contra Cel-
 sum.

Speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

And (4.) he hath no less Power then he hath Truth ; but being the *Son of God*, the heir of all things, can make good his gracious promises, and put us into the possession of the *Eternall Inheritance*, which we expect as coheirs with him. He was declared the *Son of God with power by his resurrection from the dead* ; i. *Rom.* 4. according to his own prayer just before he offered up himself to God, *Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee : As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternall life to as many as thou hast given him.* xvii. *Joh.* 1, 2.

And can we think (5.) that he will not faithfully execute this trust, and imploy his power for the end to which it was given him ? He would not then be like his Father, *who keepeth Truth for ever* : As he also most certainly will ; being the *same Jesus yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* xiii. *Heb.* 8. For if *Moses* was faithful in the house of another, wherein he was but a *Servant* : no doubt our Lord, who is a *Son over his own house or family*,

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(iii. *Heb. 6.*) will not fail to discharge his royall office with all exactness; but manifest himself to be like his Name, *The Word of God*, xix. *Rev. 13. Faithfull and true*, ver. 11.

II. This RECORD concerning him St. *John* thought so weighty and secure an evidence, that he concludes all good Christians as sure of Eternall Life, as if it were already in their hands. For after he had said here, (in the words I am explaining) that God hath *given us*, i. e. made us a promise of, *Eternall Life, which is in his Son*; he adds immediately, (which is the *Second* thing I intended to note,) that *we have eternall life*. Which cannot signify less, then that we have such a good right to it, that we may account it ours. The reason is, because he that effectually believes in *Jesus*, hath him in whose power it is to give it, and who hath passed his word, many a time, that he will bestow it. So you reade ver. 12. *He that hath the Son, hath life*. He may be as sure of it as if it were in his present possession: for by faith in *Christ* he is united to him who is the fountain and well-spring of life and bliss, and stands ingaged divers ways to make all the Members of his Body

dy happy with himself. For to as many as received him he gave *Ætial* power, or authority, to become the Sons of God: i. *Joh.* 12. who may legally claim the consummation of their adoption, in the Eternall Inheritance. They are by his grant unquestionable heirs of it, and have such a strong title to it, that they can never be defeated of it. *This heavenly Estate is in them*, as Lawyers speak, *though they be not in it.* They have an indisputable right, I mean, to it, and may call it theirs; though they be not yet seized of it, and have not taken possession; which in due time none can hinder or debar them of. So the Apostle would have the Faithfull stedfastly believe; for this was the very end for which he recorded the Evidences forementioned, that *they might know they have eternall life*, ver. 13. which he repeats often in his Gospell, as you may reade iii. *Joh.* 36. v. 24. vi. 47. where he asserts this in the most earnest manner, and assures them that he spake of this matter out of certain knowledge, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.* He is a most happy man, and may look upon himself as owner of more then all this world is worth. Which he can never lose, though

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he be not yet entred upon his inheritance; because it is in the custody of him who hath all power in heaven and earth, and hath said, as it there follows, ver. 54. *I will raise him up at the last day.*

Well then, seeing that these are the things we expect, *to have our sins blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come, to be made children of the resurrection, to be delivered from the wrath to come, to have glorious bodies, to reign with Christ, and to be made heirs of all things*; and seeing we are said to *have this blis, i. e. to have a certain right to it, if we believe on him*; and seeing also that our right is apparent from the same *Records or Witnesses* whereby it was proved that *Jesus is the Son of God*: All that I can apprehend remaining to be done, to give us a fuller certainty of these promises, is to make particular inquiry what every one of those *Witnesses*, which testify to *Jesus*, say to this point, that *God hath given us eternall life, and that this life is in his Son*. This is the RECORD, St. *John* saith, *i. e. this is the matter of it*. Let us examine, if you please, all these *Six Witnesses* one after another upon this matter, and see if they do not give the same evidence of
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it that they have done of the other; and make as infallible proofs that God hath given us this blessing, and that it is in him, as they do that *Jesus* is the Son of God, and came from him.

There is no way like to this (that I know of) to attain a strong faith and hope of Eternall Life: which it infinitely concerns us all to make sure, and to have a well-grounded perswasion of, both that we may live comfortably in the midst of all troubles; and that we may be able to overcome all temptations; and that we may be willing to die; and, when nothing else will give us the least comfort, we may lift up our heads with unspeakable joy.

For what can deject their hearts, whose hope is firmly fixt in Heaven? What should make them complain, who have for their Inheritance everlasting Life? Unspeakable, unconceivable are the glories, innumerable are the good things, which God hath prepared for those that love him. As in things visible, the plants, the seeds, the flowers are so numerous that none can count them, nor is it possible to cast up the summe of all the other treasures of the Earth; or as in the Sea, the wit of man cannot comprehend the creatures

Macarius
Hom
XXXIV.

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in it, either their number, or their kinds, or their differences, or take the measure of its waters, or of its place; or as in the Air none can number the Birds, or in the Heaven tell all the Stars: So it is impossible to tell or conceive the riches of Christians in the invisible world; their unmeasurable, their infinite, their incomprehensible Riches. For if these Creatures are so infinite and incomprehensible by man, how much more He that made and form'd them all?

And therefore it ought to fill every Christian heart with the greater joy and exultation of spirit, because the Riches and Inheritance prepared for them so much surpasses all that can be uttered. And with all diligence and humility should we buckle our selves to the Christian Combate, that we may be partakers of their Riches. For the Inheritance and the portion of Christians is God himself. They may say, with David, The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance; My lines are falln unto me in pleasant places; yea I have a goodly heritage. Glory be to him who gives us himself. Glory be to him for ever, who mixes his own Nature with Christian Souls.

Id m Hom.

O the ineffable kindness of God, who bestows no less then himself upon us! O the

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the ineffable happiness of such Souls, who are wholly in joy and mirth and peace, as so many Kings, and Lords, and Gods ! Behold here thy Nobility. Christianity is no vulgar or contemptible thing. Thou art called to the dignity of a Kingdome ; not like that of earthly Princes, whose glory and riches are corruptible and pass away : but to the Kingdom of God, to Riches divine and celestiall which never decay. For there blessed Souls reign together with the heavenly King, and in the heavenly company.

Since such good things therefore are set before us, such glorious promises are made us, such great good will of our Lord is manifested towards us ; let us not despise his kindness, nor be slack in our motion towards Eternall Life : but give up our selves intirely to the good pleasure of the Lord. And let us call upon him, that by the power of his Divinity he would redeem us from the dark prison of dishonourable affections, and vindicating his own Image and Workmanship, cause it to shine most brightly ; till our Souls be so sound and pure, that we be made worthy of the communion of the Spirit, giving glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost for ever. Amen.

17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836. 837. 838. 839. 840. 841. 842. 843. 844. 845. 846. 847. 848. 849. 850. 851. 85

CHAP. VI.

Concerning the Testimony of the
FATHER.

WE must begin, as we did before, with the *Witnesses in Heaven*: the first of which, you know, is the FATHER; who spake *three* times from Heaven by an audible voice, to testify to our Lord *Jesus*. And if you examine again all that he hath said, you will find *both* these things recorded in his words, that he hath given us ETERNAL LIFE, and that *this* LIFE is in his Son.

I.

The first time that God the FATHER spake from Heaven was at our Saviour's Baptism; when the Heavens were opened, and a Voice came from thence, which said, *Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.* iii. Luk. 22. In which words there are *two* things, very
remar-

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remarkable, which plainly testifie to the Truth of those *two* now mentioned, that **L I F E** is in his Son, and, that we shall partake of it.

I. That He calls *Jesus* his **S O N**, and his *beloved* Son. Which being spoken from heaven in such a glorious manner as the Gospell describes it, must needs signifie him to be his **S O N** in the most eminent sense; for it was never said to any Angel in this sort, *Thou art my Son*, my beloved Son. This declared him to have *the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him bodily*, to be invested with his own authority and power, and to be that Seed promised who should bless all the World: which is a thing too great for any one to doe but for **G O D** himself. It was by an audible voice from heaven that the Angel of the Lord called to *Abraham*, to tell him *the LORD had sworn by himself, that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed.* xxii. Gen. ver. 15, 16, 18. And so now, to shew us the Seed was come who should be such a great Benefactour to mankind, the **L O R D** himself speaks by a voice from Heaven, declaring *Jesus* to be his **S O N**, the Authour of that Univerfall
Bliss

Bliss which he had promised. Which tells us plainly enough that **L I F E** is in him: (which is one of the things that *St. John* affirms upon this *Record* :) for else he would not be such a **SON** as he now declared him, able to *bleſs all Nations*. Who it is manifest had him not for their visible Leader, as the *Israelites* had *Moses* and *Joshua* to give them a temporall inheritance; and therefore were to have his spirituall Divine Benediction in another world, where He is *the authour of eternall Salvation to all that obey him*.

And lest you should imagine this to be merely a collection of mine own, which I have forced out of these words, I will refer you to our Saviour's own interpretation of them in that speech of his v. *Joh. 26. For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself*. Here he teaches us to argue, that, if he be the **SON** of God, as this voice said he was, then he is by the same voice declared to *have L I F E in himself*; because the Father hath so, whom his **SON**, his onely **SON**, doth perfectly resemble. And he teaches us withall, that this is a power communicated to him, as he is the *Christ* : for he saith the Father *hath given him*

him to have life in himself, and that (as you reade in the next verse) because *he is the Son of man*; that is, the great person he promised to send of the seed of *Abraham*. Now we reade of no other time when the Father might be said to have *given him* this power, but now, when he owned him for his SON, and anointed him, as you shall hear, with the Holy Ghost, to preach the glad tidings of immortal life. Now *God the Father sealed* and authorized him to be the person, to whom we must repair for *the meat that endureth to everlasting life*. vi. *Joh.* 27. He declared him now to be *the bread of God*, as he calls himself, *which gives life to the world*, ver. 33. *the bread of life*, ver. 35. *the living bread*, ver. 51. *the manna which came down from heaven*, and nourishes to eternall life: in short, to have all things committed to him, that *whatsoever things the Father doeth, these also, you may be sure, the Son doeth likewise*. v. *Joh.* 19. He doeth them $\kappa\tau\iota \ \tau\eta\varsigma \ \epsilon\gamma\omega\iota\alpha\varsigma \ \delta\iota\upsilon\omicron\lambda\eta\mu\iota\alpha\upsilon$, after the same equality and perfect likeness of power: (as *Greg. Nazianz* *. expounds the word $\delta\iota\omega\iota\omega\varsigma$ *likewise* in this place.) So that we need no more doubt of his ability, then we do of *God the Father's*, to give eternall life to all his followers.

* *Orat.* 36.
p. 584. D.

II. And that he will imploy his power to make us partakers of it, (which is the other part of the *Record* concerning this Eternal Life,) is manifest from the next part of this voice of God the Father, which said, *in thee I am well pleased*. He expresses here, that he takes a singular delight in this person, and bears such a dear affection to him, that there is nothing he will deny him. Now that hereby is denoted also his exceeding great love and good will towards all those that belong to his Son, you may be soon satisfied, by observing that these are the very words wherein God declares his loving-kindness towards his Church in the days of *Christ*, lxii. *Isa.* 4. There the Lord calls her *הפזי בא* *Hephzi-bah*, ἡ ἐυδαιμόνη μου ἐν αὐτῇ, (as some Greek versions render it,) *my delight is in her*. That's the reason he himself gives of her name, as it there follows, *for the LORD delighteth in thee*. Where the *LXX* use the very word in which this voice from heaven is recorded, ὅτι ὁ Κύριος ἐυδαιμόνησεν, *for the LORD is well pleased in thee*. From whence I think it reasonable to conclude that, the same thing being said of both, God declared his delight in all Christians, and the pleasure he will take in bestowing his benefits

benefits on them, when he declared himself to be *well pleased* in this his dear Son, whom they acknowledge for their Lord and Master. He tells us by this voice, that he will be reconciled to us, and, forgetting our ill behaviour towards him, will espouse us to himself (as it follows in the Prophet) in the tenderest love, and rejoyce to bestow his choicest favours on us.

And that this is no inference merely wrung from these words, or a notion of my own contrivance, you may presently agree, if you consider that thus *John Baptist*, in all likelihood, understood them. For seeing *Jesus*, a little after he had baptized him, coming towards him, he cried out, *Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.* i. *Joh. 29.* And again, the next day after this he pointed two of his Disciples unto *Jesus*, and said in part the very same words, *Behold the Lamb of God,* ver. 36. Now what is it to be the *Lamb of God*, but to be a Sacrifice of God's own appointment, so pleasing and acceptable to him, that it obtains all the ends for which it was offered? And what is it to *take away the sins of the world*, but by overcoming all the temptations to
which

which *Adam* yielded, and being obedient even to the death, to restore us unto a right of entring Paradise again, from whence our Sins have excluded us? to open the Kingdom of heaven to all believers, by removing, as I may say, the flaming Sword; that is, taking those obstacles out of the way that debarred us from approaching to the Tree of life? This, no doubt, is the compleat meaning of *Carrying away the sins of mankind*, which are the onely impediments that hinder us from the enjoyment of immortality: and therefore being gone, we have free leave to return to it. Now *John the Baptist* had no other ground that we can find for this Conclusion, but onely this Voice, which I proved he heard, from the Father, concerning the pleasure which he took in his Son. Whereby he did as good as affirm, that his delight in *Jesus*, *who delighted to doe his will*, was so great, that he would restore us into his ancient love for his sake, and be perfectly appeased and reconciled to us by his means: so that we should be no longer banished from his blessed presence, but by the forgiveness of our sins be placed again in that happy state, from which we had stood so long exiled.

II.

Now from hence let us pass to take a review of the *Second* Testimony of the *Father* to him; where we shall find the same thing recorded again, that *He bath given us eternall life*, and that *this life is in his Son*; i.e. it is in his power to give it. The places are well known where we may meet with it, in xvii. *Matt.* and other Evangelists, which tell us that *Jesus*, being on an high Mountain with three of his Disciples, who were wont to attend him on particular occasions, was transfigured before them, and a voice came from Heaven, which said, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear him.* It would be too tedious to speak of this *Mountain*, and his *Transfiguration* there, in such a glorious manner that his *Countenance shone as the Sun*: (though this may reasonably be thought (as I shewed in the former Treatise) to be a representation of his *Ascension* into heaven, where he shines at the right hand of the Father, and is the *Lord of glory.*) And therefore I shall onely observe two things: *first*, the words now added to the voice formerly delivered; *secondly*,

secondly, the manner wherein they were spoken in the audience of those Apostles.

I. As for the words now added in this *second* voice to those of the *first*, (wherein he had declared him, as he doth here again, his beloved Son, in whom he delighted,) they are these, **H E A R Y E H I M.** Which are the very words that *Moses* spake to the Children of *Israel* when he prophesied of the *Messiah*, and said, (*xviii. Deut. 15.*) *unto him ye shall hearken.* And it may be one reason why *Moses* was now present when God spake these words in the Mount; that he might consent to this truth which was now so solemnly pronounced in his hearing, that *Jesus* was the Great person of whom he had prophesied. Now God bidding the Apostles **H E A R H I M**, and *Moses* for himself, to whom they had hearkened all this while, being content that he should take his room; it is an argument of something to be declared by him that *Moses* had not spoken. And what should that be, but onely *the words of Eternall Life*, which was but obscurely intimated and shadowed in the ancient Law; but by him was preached so clearly and distinctly;

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stinctly, that the voice of the Heavens is not more audible?

There is nothing, I shall shew in due place, that our Saviour preached so frequently, nothing upon which he insisted so long and earnestly, and took such pains to settle in mens minds, as this belief, that *Eternall Life* shall be the portion of all that doe well. And therefore when God the Father bad them *hear him*, who made it his principall busines to publish this glad tidings to the World, it was the very same as if this Voice had said in express words, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; believe it, He shall give you eternall life.*

This is *the Commandment* his Father gave him, as you heard before, xii. *Joh.* 50. This is *the will of him that sent him*, vi. *Joh.* 40. This is *the promise that he hath promised us, even eternall life*, i *Joh.* ii. 25. And therefore he stands engaged to bestow it, and we agree with him for it when we enter into his service. For you may observe farther, that as to *hear Moses* was to embrace the Covenant that God made with them by him; so we can understand no less by *hearing the Son of God*,

God, then our entring into the New Covenant, of which he is the Mediatour; which is founded upon *better promises* than the former, whereby we have a title to a celestially, not an earthly inheritance, whereof he is the Lord, and to which he hath engaged himself to be our Conductor.

And indeed *Moses* and *Elias*, who were never called the Sons of God, much less by a voice from heaven so termed, appearing now with our Saviour in glory, it was a notable sign that He should be taken up to a far greater glory than theirs, and have power of changing men into such a condition as that wherein he was now transfigured; and in the mean time should preach that life and immortality, which they saw conferred upon those two persons to honour him.

Whom the Disciples, you may observe again, saw in a glory so much greater then the Law-giver himself now had, that if the voice from heaven had been silent, it would have been an argument our Saviour should be the Lord of glory: For when they desired to make their abode there, and for that purpose to

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build

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build three Tabernacles, they say, *one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias*; putting him in the first place before the other two: which they would not sure have done, had not *Moses* and *Elias* done reverence to him as a greater person then themselves.

* in xlix.
Gen. 10.

I shall end this with a Tradition among the *Hebrews*, which, if it signifie any thing, may serve to shew that *Jesus* is their long-expected *Christ*. For *R. Bechai* saith*, that when *Jacob* speaks of the coming of *Schilo*, he comprehends not onely the last Redeemer, (the *Messiah*;) but the first Redeemer also, *i. e.* *Moses*, who shall have the honour then to attend upon the *Messiah*, and enter into the holy land: according to what the Masters say upon xv. *Exod.* 1. where the words are, *then Moses ישיׁ shall sing*. And in the great Commentary upon *Deuteronomy* they write, (as the same Authour goes on,) that *God said to Moses*, *Because thou didst give thy life for them in this world*, (desiring that God would blot his name out of the book of life, to preserve theirs,) *in the world to come, i. e.* the days of the *Messiah*, *when I shall bring Elias to them, you two shall enter in together.*

ther. Which may possibly be the meaning of those words i. *Joh. 21. Art thou Elias?* and he said, *I am not. Art thou that Prophet?* i. e. *Moses*, who alone was worthy of the name of ὁ Προφήτης, the Prophet, above all others. Now if there were any ground of such expectation, that these two should come in their own persons, you see it here fulfilled on this holy Mount; where *Moses*, who was so much in mount *Horeb*, and *Elias*, who used mount *Carmel*, now appeared, and had communication with him about his departure out of this world, unto his heavenly Kingdome. ix. *Luk. 31.*

The Mount where they met, and where *Jesus* was transfigured, is generally believed to be *Tabor*; as *Hermon*, a little hill near *Jordan*, there is a tradition, was the place from whence *Elias* was taken up to heaven. In these two Mountains, saies *Proclus* *, our Lord *Jesus* was proclaimed the Beloved Son of God, from whom we may expect immortall bliss. At *Hermon*, when he was baptized in *Jordan*; on *Tabor*, when he was transfigured, and appeared in a glory as much greater then *Elias's*, as the high mountain *Tabor* was above the little hill of *Hermon*. And so

* *Orat. viii.*

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was fulfilled, says he, that prophecie of the Psalmist, lxxxix. 12. *Tabor and Hermon shall rejoyce in thy Name.* In both places was published this joyfull news, that God had sent his Son to be the Saviour of the World. First in the mount from whence *Elias* was transported into heaven; and then in the mount where he came to attend on our Lord when he was transfigured, God the Father, *Βεβαιῶν ὑμῶν*, confirming his Sonship, proclaimed again with a loud voice, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear him.* For he that heareth him, heareth me, as *Proclus* there glosses; and he that is ashamed of him and his words, of him will I be ashamed in my glory.

Let us listen to him therefore: and since we hear him say, as I noted before, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my words, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life; (v. Joh. 24.)* let us take it for as expresse a declaration from God the Father, as if that voice which required them to hear *Jesus* had said, *You that are obedient to my Son have everlasting life, and are in no danger to perish, being*

being translated from the dominion of death to be heirs of life.

II. And now from the consideration of the words that were spoken, let us pass to the manner wherein they were delivered: which is so vastly different from that wherein God spake formerly to *Moses* and the children of *Israel* from another mountain, that I cannot but think it was intended to signifie something of the grace of *Eternall Life*, which *Jesus* brings to us. When he was transfigured, and his face shone as the Sun, the Evangelist tells us moreover, that his raiment became glistening, exceeding white as snow, and that a bright cloud also overshadowed them, out of which the voice before named came, saying, *This is my beloved Son*, &c. Which, if it be compared with former divine Manifestations of the same kind, we may reasonably look upon as an indication, that this Person came to discover (1.) something more glorious than *Moses* had done, and (2.) something that expresses more abundant love and kindness of God towards men; which is nothing else but *Eternall Life*.

First, I say, something more glorious and resplendent, or, as the Apostle speaks, *2 Cor. iv. 6. the light of the knowledge of the glory of God*, which we behold in the face of *Jesus Christ*. For the Mount to which *Moses* went up, and where he and the people heard God speak to them, was all covered with *clouds and thick darkness*. Thus God himself told him beforehand he would appear. *xix. Exod. 9.* And so he did when the day prefixed for it came: *vers. 16, 18.* Unto that *thick darkness Moses* drew near: *xx. 21.* And the people also stood underneath the mountain, beholding it burn with fire into the midst of heaven, *with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness. iv. Deut. 11. xix. Exod. 17.* All which places the Reader may be pleased to consult; together with *xxiv. Exod. 18.* where we find that *Moses* went into the midst of this cloud, and there was covered and quite obscured from their sight. A very fit emblem of the obscurity of the knowledge which they then had of God and of his will; and of the terrors of the Law, which was *a ministration of death*, as the Apostle speaks, and so astonished them with the thunders and lightning, which came out of the cloud, that they fled

fled and stood afar off. xx. Exod. 18. As on the other side, God appearing now to our Saviour in a quite contrary manner, on the top of another Mountain, where there was no black cloud, (though it was in the night,) no smoak or sulphureous vapour, much less a thick darkness hiding him from his Disciples sight, nothing but a bright and lightsome cloud which overshadowed them, and shewed them the glory wherein he shone; it was a lively representation of the *light* which he (*the Light of the world*) came to give to them that sate in darkness and in the shadow of death, and of the glory and bliss whereof he was the Minister; unto which he invited mankind in words of grace and sweetness, as he did his Disciples to stay here on the mountain by those chearfull beams wherewith the glory of the Lord surrounded them.

For this manner of appearing (as I said *Secondly*) plainly suggests some greater manifestation of the love and kindness, the goodness and bounty of Heaven to mankind, then had been made before in that way of revelation to *Moses*, which was so much different from the sweetness and amiableness of this. When *Moses* conversed

conversed with God upon mount *Sinai*, he descended thither in Fire, as the places before mentioned tell you; *And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire, in the eyes of the children of Israel.* xxiv. *Exod.* 17. v. *Deut.* 22, 23. But when our Blessed Lord took his Apostles with him to a sight of the Divine Glory, there was onely the appearance of a wonderfull bright and chearful light; some mild rays from heaven, which had nothing of terror in them, but ravished them with joy to find themselves in so glorious a Presence. And therefore they were not left at the foot of this *high mountain*, as *Moses* left the *Israelites* at the bottom of the other; but he brought them up with him. xvii. *Matth.* 1. And they were not put into a fright, as the *Israelites* were, who removed their station at the sight of the fire on mount *Sinai*; nor did they shriek, as their Forefathers did there, who cried out, saying, *Why should we die? for this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, we shall die. Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.* v. *Deuter.* 25. xx. *Exod.* 19. But they were ravished out of themselves with the glory of this sight; which was so inviting to
their

their eyes, that they wisht for no other station, but desired to remain perpetually fixed there. They were so far from running away, that they said, *Let us make here three Tabernacles*; as if they meant to pitch there the place of their abode, and never take their eyes from so beautifull a Light.

It is observable also, that in the dark Mountain where *Moses* was, together with the fire and thunder and lightnings, there was the *noise of a Trumpet exceeding loud*; which made not onely *all the people tremble*, but *the whole mount quaked greatly*. xix. *Exod.* 16, 18. And God spake likewise to the people *with a great voice*; (v. *Deut.* 22.) wherewith both they were so astonished as to wish never to hear it more, and *Moses* himself also (so terrible was the sight together with the noise) said, *I exceedingly fear and quake*. xii. *Heb.* 21. Whereas on the Mountain where our Lord was transfigured there was not one such frightfull flash, nor the least dreadful sound; nothing but his own glistering Body, the splendour of *Moses* and *Elias*, the brightness of a heavenly cloud, and this one sweet voice, which proclaimed nothing but love and grace in their ears,

ears, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear him.*

St. *Matthew* indeed tells us that, when the Disciples *heard, they fell on their faces, and were sore afraid*: xvii. 6. But this doth not signify that they were seized with any horror at the dreadfulnes of the sound; but onely amazed at the suddenness of the voice, and the marvellous splendour of the Light. And therefore the other Evangelists do not mention any such terrour after the voice; which, being accompanied with a glory they had never beheld, might well amaze them, but did not make them tremble. The very apparition of Angels was wont to be so surprising as to dazzle mens eyes, and make them bow their faces to the ground. xxiv. *Luk.* 5. And therefore such a glorious splendour as this, equalling that of the Sun, might well make the Apostles fall prostrate upon the earth, in great fear or amazement. But then our Lord presently came and comforted them by a gracious touch, bidding them *arise, and not be afraid*, though they saw such a light, and heard such a voice as this: to which indeed they had not been accustomed, but was the most amiable, and ought to be
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the most welcome, of any that could salute the eyes and ears of mankind.

St. Mark, it is observable, says that, before this voice came out of the heavenly glory, *they were sore afraid*; ix. 6. i. e. were so amazed at such an unwonted sight, or, as *Proclus* * calls it, *τὸ μαρμαίον*

* Orat. viii.
in Transfi-
gur. Domi-
ni.

τὸ δέος ἐν ἁγίοις, the strangeness and unexpectedness of the Divine Brightness shining on them, that it put them quite beside themselves. But that it was a sweet

mixture of those devout passions, *fear* and *joy*, is manifest from the foregoing verse, with which those words cohere: where you reade, they were so delighted and ravished with the sight, that they thought not of going down from thence any more; but were projecting for their perpetuall habitation in that happy place. Which Rapture seems to have been a foretaste of the joy which they were to expect, when he should ascend to that glorious state, which was now represented in his Transfiguration on the Mount.

Before I conclude this, I shall here take notice, as I pass to what remains, of something that may help to prove, our
Lord

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Lord Jesus is the person by whom God always intended to speak his mind to the World. For it was at this very time (when the Israelites, by reason of the terrible sights and thundring noises, desired God they might hear his voice no more,) that he promised to speak to them by such a Prophet as Moses, and in a more familiar manner; requiring them to hear that person, when he came and spake, as they themselves desired. So you reade *xviii. Dent. 15, 16, 17, 18.* where, when they say, *Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not;* the Lord said, *They have well spoken, I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and I will put my word in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I have commanded him. Which was perfectly fulfilled in our Blessed Saviour, (whatsoever lesser meaning it might have before,) who spake the words of God, and not of himself, but as the Father gave him commandment; and was a Prophet like to Moses, as in other regards, so in this, that he was with God upon the Mount, heard him speak there to these Israelites his Disciples, is commended to them as the person they should*
hear;

hear ; but in a voice so sweet and in a way so agreeable, that they did not wish never to hear it more, but rather always to be so happy, as to have such friendly converse with Heaven, and receive such tokens of God's Fatherly love.

For as the fire and smoak and darkness, together with those terrible noises, were testimonies from God to *Moses*, that they who would not *hear him*, but transgressed his Laws, should be the objects of his dreadfull displeasure, and be destroyed from among their neighbours : So this universall light and brightness which smiled on them, in the cloud and in his raiment, and in his countenance and in his company, when these gracious words sounded in their ears, were most manifest tokens from heaven of the extraordinary favour of God towards those that obey the Lord *Jesus* ; who shall be saved from death, and made exceeding happy and glorious.

The far greater part of the Precepts of the Law being negative, as is evident even from the Ten Commandments, (to say nothing of the computation which the *Jews* have made of the whole,) it
abounds

abounds more with Threatnings and fearful denunciations of Judgement, then it doth with gracious and inviting Promises. But most of the Precepts of the Gospell being affirmative, obliging us to doe all the good we can, and to be *abundant in the work of our Lord*; you reade therefore more frequently of exceeding great and precious Promises to encourage our *labour of love*, then of Threatnings to deterr us from evill doing. And consonant to this, as that frightfull appearance of old on Mount *Sinai*, was to shew God's anger and fiery indignation against offenders: so this comfortable Presence now on Mount *Tabor*, was to represent his loving-kindness and tender mercy to all obedient persons. And as the anger of God, declared by the fire and smoak, was his inflicting *Death* upon them: so his good will, declared by this friendly light and cleatness in the heavens, is his bestowing upon us *Life*. And as by the former *Moses* was noted by God to be the Minister of death to all transgressours: so our *Lord* was hereby represented as the Minister of Life and Righteousness to all that in him live **godly.**

Now

Now that all these Observations are not the product of mere fancy, but have some reall truth in them, this is none of the least arguments; That the *Jews* themselves* make it a Question worth the answering, *why God uttered his voice to Moses out of the midst of the fire and darkness, and not rather out of the midst of light.* Which is a plain acknowledgment of the nobleness and perfection of this way wherein God manifested himself upon the *Holy Mount*, (as *St. Peter* calls it,) and that it was far more desirable then that wherein he appeared to *Moses*; else they would not have moved this doubt; and endeavoured so laboriously to solve it: pretending that it was onely to shew in what a dismall condition they were without the Law, which was not to be sent till after forty days were past; during all which time *the Court of the heavenly King was hung with black, and not with white.* Which as it is a frivolous conceit; so hath no truth in it. For God spake the *Ten Words* or Commandments out of the fire and smoak, before *Moses* went to stay in the Mount forty days; where he onely received the pattern of God's House (which he was to make) and all belonging to it; together with the Two Tables

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whereon

* Pirke
Eliezer c.
xl.

whereon these X Commandments were engraven. All the rest of the Laws were spoken to him out of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, after he had built it: (i. *Levit. I.*) and we do not find then *the heavens hung with white*, (to use their phrase,) as they were now when he spake concerning our Saviour, and bad his disciples *hear him*.

But I intend not to trouble my self with confuting their idle fancies. The use that I make of this Question is, That if they would have thought it a disparagement to their Master *Moses*, (did they not satisfy themselves with this ridiculous reason for it,) to be spoken unto after such a manner as the Scripture of truth relates; then, by their own confession, it is a great honour to our Lord and Master, and argues his high dignity, that the Divine Majesty spake to him in such a way as they cannot but esteem most perfect, and agreeable to his Divine Goodness. And we may look upon this pure Light (in which God is said to dwell) as a sign that Heaven was to be opened by this Person, and that he would restore us to the Glory of God, of which we were all fallen short; and bring man-

mankind to that joy and satisfaction of heart, which the Disciples began to feel in themselves at this most comfortable sight.

And I make no question, had not the holy Books told us so expressly, that God spake to them in clouds and fire and vapour, they would have fabled that he appeared to their Master in pure light, and shone about him in the brightness of his glory, without the least darkness to obscure it. For I find that many of those things which the holy Story of the New Testament reports in honour of *John Baptist* or of our Blessed Saviour, they have thrust into the Story of *Moses*, (where he himself in his Books hath not confessed the contrary,) to keep him in the greater credit with their Nation in this time of their calamitous desertion. It being recorded, for example, that *John Baptist* was born when his parents were very old, and could not believe it was possible for them to have a child; (which makes his birth a wonder, being out of the course of Nature;) they have made bold to tell the same of *Moses*, (but with a large addition of years,) whose mother *Jochebed*, they say, was no less than an

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* A. Ezra
in ii. Exod.
ver. 1.

* R. Solo-
mon in
ii. Exod. 3.

hundred and thirty years old when she was delivered of him : which *Aben Ezra*, in his Notes upon the text *, is desirous should pass for a current truth. And as we read that, when our Saviour came into the world, the *Glory of the LORD* (an exceeding great light from heaven) shone round about the shepherds who had the first news of it ; (which was intended as a note of his Divinity and heavenly descent :) So they have devised * that, at the Nativity of *Moses*, the house where he was born was filled with such a light, that they could not see by reason of its splendour.

R. Moses
Haccozi.

R. Joshua
F. Sobib in
xxx. Exod.

In like manner the Apostle proves our Lord to be greater then the Angels, far above all principality and power, &c. (i. *Heb.* 3, 4. i. *Eph.* 19, 20.) and therefore *Moses*, forsooth, must be raised to this wondrous pitch ; whom some of their Rabbins (all are not so immodest) will have to be higher מלאכים השרת then the *Angels of Ministry* ; far above all creatures (as another expresses it) both *superiour and inferiour*. As if they meant to equall him with that great Lord who we believe is raised far above every name that is named, *not onely in this world, but also*
in

in that which is to come. And because also our Lord we affirm, and are sure, is now the *Minister of the heavenly Sanctuary*, where he presents his own blood before God for us, as *Aaron* did the blood of beasts in the earthly Sanctuary: therefore they likewise have feigned (as *Maimonides* relates from the mouth of their Doctours*) that their Master *Moses* is not dead, but ascended, ומשמש במרום and ministers to God in the heavenly places. And because our Lord is here said to be transfigured on this Mountain, and his face shone like the Sun: they have therefore transformed *Moses* also; who, they say, was found by the Angel of death (whom God sent to the Mountain whether he was gone up, to take away his life,) writing the great Name of God; and his face was as the Sun, and he himself like an Angel of the Lord. I have observed the same before about the *Bath kol* voice from heaven, which spake to our Saviour, whose glory they study to eclipse by spreading abroad a number of tales concerning the like approbation given to their Doctours.

* Ludov. Capell. ecc. Prefat. in Talm. Not. in xvii. Matth. 3.

I am bold to call these reports by that name, and to ascribe them to that cause,

because there are no footsteps of such things in the history which *Moses* wrote of himself; (who by all just ways endeavoured to beget in them a belief that he was a Prophet sent of God;) and because such inventions might easily come into the minds of those obstinate persons, who knew not how to confute Christianity, which interest and prejudice would not let them receive, but were desirous by any means, though never so false, to raise *Moses* to the same degree of greatness and esteem with the *Authour and finisher of our faith*. But it is to be considered then, that they suppose such things to be a notable sign of the excellency of that person to whom they really belong: and consequently, that our Lord *Jesus*, who hath these very marks upon him which they would ingrave on *Moses*, being thus described in those Books that are certainly Divine among us, as clearly as *Moses* is in any other regards commended in those that are truly holy among them, is a Great Prophet indeed, far greater then *Moses*, (who never durst say any such thing of himself, nor is so magnified by any of the succeeding Prophets,) the Authour of a better Covenant, and of more divine Promises, such as this of

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ETERNALL LIFE; which it is most agreeable for him to bestow, whose Kingdom was not in this world, (as *Moses's* was,) but he reigns in the other world *Lord of all* for evermore.

III.

To him God the Father hath given a *third* Testimony; (unto which it is now time to pass;) and it is a very express Record of this Truth, that *we have Eternall Life*, and that *it is in his Son*. It is set down, you know, in the xii. *Joh.* 28. where, upon our Saviour's request to God that he would glorifie his own Name, a voice from heaven gave this answer, *I have both glorified it, and will glorifie it again*. The particle (*it*) hath nothing answering to it in the *Greek*, but is put in by the Translatours to supply the sense. And some are of the opinion, that the word *ε* is to be understood, and the meaning to be thus rendred, *I have both glorified thee, and will glorifie thee again*. But there is no need of this; we may as well refer the word *glorifie* to *Name*, as our translation doth, and it will come at last to the same sense: for God's name was glorified by glorify-

Fragment.
L. viii. in
Joh.

ing his Son, as appears from xi. *Joh.* 4. And so St. *Cyrill* of *Alexandria* observed long ago: Whether the Scripture be, *glorifie thy Son*, or, *glorifie thy Name*, τὸν δὲ τῇ τῶν θεοσημάτων ἀκριβείᾳ, it is all one in exact contemplation of things.

Now if the truth of these words be thoroughly examined, how he *had glorified him*, and how he *would glorifie him again*, we shall meet in both with a plain testimony that *Eternall Life* is in his Son, to bestow on us. Let us consider them briefly apart.

I. As for the former, I find that God had already *glorified him*, before he spake these words, *three ways*.

1. By his Transfiguration, of which I now discoursed; for then St. *Luke* saith, ix. 32. *they saw his glory*. And that by this *Glory* which they saw the Father testified he should be made glorious in the heavens, and able to make us so; I refer you to what I have said already on this Argument.

2. And I need not use many words to shew, that he had also glorified him very

ry frequently by the many wonderfull works which he had wrought ; for in them it is likewise expressely said, ii. *Joh.* 11. *he manifested forth his Glory :* and the multitude were excited by them to magnifie him with Hosanna's, and to cry out, *Glory in the highest.* xix. *Luk.* 37, 38. By these also he shewed the power wherewith he was indued to doe any thing that he had promised : and they moved his Disciples hearts, as you reade in the place now mentioned, (ii. *Joh.* 11.) *to believe on him.*

3. But there was a *third* glorification of him, to which I believe these words have a more speciall reference ; because it was very famous, and but newly passed : Which was his raising *Lazarus* from the dead. By this *Jesus* said expressely that *glory* should redound to God the Father, and that He, the Son of God, should also be *glorified thereby.* xi. *Joh.* 4. For this very end, he there teaches his Disciples, *Lazarus* fell sick, and he therefore delayed to go and recover him, (though his great friend,) that there might be a fit opportunity, by the miraculous resurrection of so noted a person, (as *Lazarus* was, it appears by the

the coming of such numbers to comfort his sisters, vers. 19.) and in a place so nigh to *Jerusalem*, (vers. 18.) where the greatest opposition was made against him, to doe honour to *Jesus*; and to make it known, that he assumed not more glory to himself then God the Father gave him. This was a very great testimony from God, that indeed LIFE was in him, and that he did not vainly call himself (vers. 25.) *the resurrection, and the life*; because he now, with his almighty word, restored one to life who had been so long dead, that there was no possibility of his reviving but by the very LIFE it self.

Hereby he declared that, *as the Father hath Life in himself, so he hath given the Son to have Life in himself.* v. *Joh. 26.* What he had said before in his preaching, he now justified by his works; according as he himself foretold he would, when he said, *Verily, verily, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: ver. 25.* The hour which was then coming, yea was just at hand, seems to be this time when he raised *Lazarus* up out of his grave: declaring thereby both the truth of what he had said,

said, (v. *Joh. 26.*) that *he had life in himself*; and likewise that there would be another hour, (as it presently there follows ver. 28, 29.) wherein all men whatsoever shall rise out of their graves at his voice, *and they that have done good shall come forth unto the resurrection of life, as they that have done evill, unto the resurrection of damnation.* They might well believe it, because he said it who proved himself to be *the Truth*, by such works as none could doe but he that was *the Life*.

II. But this is not all that we are to consider in this Testimony of the Father; who doth not onely say that he *had* glorified him, but that he *would* glorifie him again: which was done also at three severall times.

I. At his *Death*, when *many of the graves of the Saints that slept were opened.* xxvii. *Matth. 52.* For the very rocks rent, and the earth did quake, and the veil of the temple was torn in sunder from the top to the bottom, and the Sun refused to give its light; and such an amazement came upon the Centurion, who was then upon the guard, that he *glorified God* (xxiii. *Luk. 47.*) by confessing that *Jesus*
was

was a *righteous man*, and no pretender to a title that did not belong to him; but, as other Evangelists expresse it, *the Son of God*. To these wonderfull things concurring at his death to *glorifie* him and doe him honour, the voice from Heaven seems to have had some respect, because of what follows, ver. 31, 32, 33. *Now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.* For even now, when he seemed most weak, he began to tread the Devill under his feet. Now he began to draw not onely the *Jews* to him, but other men, the *Romans* also; one of whose Captains, in the midst of his reproach, confessed him to be the *Son of God*. The very opening of the graves served to adorn the triumph he was about to make over the powers of darkness; being a sign that he had now despoiled him *who hath the power of death*, which is the Devill; and that he had *Life in himself*, and will give it us, especially now that he hath finished his triumph, and is *glorified* at God's right hand. Of which the rending of the veil also was no obscure token, shewing that *we have liberty* (as the Apostle speaks x. Heb. 19.)

to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus.

It may seem indeed an uncouth form of speech, to call his Crucifixion by the name of ὑψωσις, *lifting up* from the earth, or *exaltation*: but one may say, and with great truth, that *Christ's death upon the Cross* (as S. Cyrill of Alexandria speaks)

ὑψωθῆναι τὸ ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ, *was his promotion, contrived for his fame and glory: for he is glorified perpetually for this, having procured many benefits to mankind by its means.* This is one part of the Record of the Father to this Truth, when he said *he would glorify* our Saviour. Which you see was as much as to say, *He would make it appear, even when he hung upon the Cross, that he was able to open mens graves, and unloose the chains of death, and in due time raise them up to everlasting life.* For,

Fragment.
L. viii. in
Job.

2. God farther *glorified* him at his *Resurrection*; which was attended with the resurrection of the dead bodies of those Saints whose graves were opened at his death. xxvii. *Matth.* 52, 53. There were severall witnesses of this in *Jerusalem*, to whom those persons deceased appeared;

as

as there were of his own resurrection, which was attested by chosen persons to whom he shewed himself openly. And then he was *lifted up from the earth* in another more noble and sublime sense, then he had been before upon the Cross. Then Angels came in bright array to testify to him what he had said of himself, xiii. *Joh.* 31, 32. that God, having *been glorified in him, had glorified him in himself.* This was a very glorious testimony that indeed he *hath Life in himself*, and shall be the Authour of eternal Life to us. And therefore he is called *the Prince* (or Authour) *of life*, iii. *Act.* 15. because by *that which overcame death* (his resurrection) ἐξωκυ

* S. Cyril.
1b. in
2ii. *Joh.*
28.

αὐτὸν ὄντα ζῶντα, &c*. *we know him to be LIFE, and the Son of the living God.* But of this more hereafter.

3. Another *Act* whereby this saying (*I will glorifie thee again*) was verified, I take to be *his Exaltation* by God's own right hand to the throne of glory in the heavens. This he prayed for with the greatest ardency and the most assured expectation, xvii. *Joh.* 1, 2. because God the Father, he saith, *had given him power* (i. e. the promise of it) *over all flesh, that he might give eternall life to as many as*
God

God had given him. This promise, I understand it, was made to him when God uttered this voice from heaven, *I have both glorified thee, and will glorifie thee again.* Then God gave him a power to raise up all, as he had lately done *Lazarus*, and to give them immortall happiness: of which as he had then the grant, so he now desires in this prayer to be put in possession. And therefore when he says vers. 1. *Father, the hour is come; glorifie thy Son, &c.* I take the meaning to be as if he had thus spoke, Now is the time to doe that which thy voice from heaven assured me should be done, *viz.* to *glorifie me* in so compleat a manner, that I may *glorifie thee*, and give eternall life to all the faithfull. This he spake with *eyes lifted up to heaven*, from whence that voice came, which bare witness of him that he should be glorified more then ever, and gave him authority to lay claim to the highest power, of bestowing immortality.

Which power when God the Father had actually put into his hands, according to this prayer and his own promise, (of which he could not fail, having ingaged himself before a multitude *to glorifie him,*)
then,

then, *being made perfect*, he became the *Authour of eternall Salvation to them that obey him.* v. Heb. 9. Then he was made a *Priest for ever*, (vii. 16, 17.) *not after the Law*, which was but a weak institution, but *after the power of an endless Life*: whereby he is able to *save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him.* He can raise up us, and all that succeed us, as well as he did *Lazarus* and others: in whom he gave onely a little taste of his power to give us Life, that shall never die.

This now is the *Third Testimony* of the Father, who, in the audience both of Friends and Strangers, said, *He had both glorified him, and would glorifie him again.* That he *had*, was then very well known; and it was as certain (because he said it) that he *would* doe the same again. By the testimony also of sufficient persons it appears, that he made good this promise, even at his Death; after which he raised him out of his grave, and lift him up far above all heavens: that he may be *glorified* once more (2 *Thess.* i. 10.) by raising us up from the dead, and promoting us to eternall glory with himself.

O wonderfull News ! He that was lifted up to hang on a Cross, is preferred now from his grave to a glorious throne ! And to come at it, he takes a journey through the air ! the clouds running under his feet become his chariot ! the sky opens to him, and the heavens with open arms receive him ! the troupes of Angels joyn together in triumphall Songs ; and persuade his amazed Disciples to keep that day a festi-
 vall on earth, as they did in heaven ! Do not stand gazing here, say they, any longer, but go and preach this wonder to the world. By his departure, represent his coming again: for so shall he come, in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

O how wonderfull are thy works, O Lord ! which give us hope (as the blessed St. Paul said when he thought of these things) that we shall then be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air : and so shall we be ever with the Lord. We can doe no less then, to those voices which came so oft from heaven to testifie this, adde our poor voice of praise and thanksgiving ; saying with the Angels, when He came into the world, **GLORY BE TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST** ; and with the multi-
 P tude

Cyrrill.
Hieros.
in occurf.
Domini.

tude when they met him at mount Olivet,
Blessed be the King that cometh in the
name of the Lord, PEACE IN HEA-
VEN, AND GLORY IN THE HIGH-
EST. Glory be to him who is the Foun-
tain of Life, coming from the Fountain of
Life, the Father. Glory be to him who
is the River of God, proceeding from the
Divine Abyss, and inseparably one with it:
the Treasure of the Father's Goodness, and
of ever-springing Blessedness: the Water of
life, who gives Life to the World: the in-
created beam of the Father of Lights, from
whom he is undivided: who being in the
form of God, took on him the form of a Ser-
vant; not lessening the dignity of his Di-
vinity, but sanctifying the mass of our
Humanity.

Him the Angels praise, the Archangels
worship, the Authorities reverence, the
Powers glorifie; the Cherubims doe him
service; the Seraphims acknowledge his Di-
vinity; the Sun and Moon minister to him:
who hath broken in pieces the gates of Hell,
and opened the gates of Heaven, and abo-
lished Death, and confounded the Devill,
and dissolved the Curse, and made Sorrow
cease, and trodden Sin under foot, and re-
stored the Creation, and inlightened the
World.

World. And therefore let us sing hymns to him with the Angels, and rejoyce in the light of the glory of God with the Shepherds, and adore him with the Wise men, and joyfully magnifie him with the blessed Virgin, and confess him with Simeon and Anna, who were glad to see his Salvation: that so we at last may also be possessed of eternall good things, through the grace and the bowels of mercy, and the loving-kindness of our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ; to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen.

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CHAP. VII.

Concerning the Testimony of the WORD, the Second Witness in Heaven.

IF we had no farther Witness of this Truth but that which hath been already produced, we might well rejoyce in the comfort which God the Father hath given us; and rely upon *Jesus* as the Author of *Eternall Life* to all those that obey him. The testimony of worthy men, as the Apostle here observes, is readily received by us: and therefore we ought to be afraid of being so rudely prophane as to reject the testimony of God; which is of far greater weight then theirs, and hath been solemnly given, you see, more then once for the confirmation of our Faith. But God the Father, *willing more abundantly to shew* (if I may borrow those words in vi. *Heb.* 17.) *unto the heirs of this promise the immutability of his counsel*, hath graciously vouchsafed us farther assurance; and by his **WORD** hath

P 3

told

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told us as much, as *He* himself declared by those voices from heaven.

Orat. contra Gentes,
p. 49.

What we are to understand by the **WORD** in this place, I have shewn in the Former Treatise, viz. the Lord *Jesus* himself, *God-Man*, or *God the WORD made flesh*; who, as *St. Athanasius* speaks, is *Ἐγγλυδὲς καὶ Ἀγγελὸς τῶ ἐαυτοῦ Πατρὸς*, *The Interpreter and Embassadour of his own Father*. For as by the word a man speaks we understand his Mind, which is the fountain from whence it comes: so (but by a more lively representation, and after an incomparably more excellent manner,) we beholding the power of the **WORD**, come to the knowledge of his Father; as our Saviour himself saith, xiv. *Joh. 9.* *He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also.* From him this **Eternall WORD** came down and was incarnate, not onely to reveal his will, but to die for our Sins, and to seal what he had preached with his Bloud. After which God raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the Heavens; from whence he testified as loudly that he hath in him **ETERNALL LIFE** for us, as he did that he is the **SON OF GOD**. This *Witness* therefore let us now examine, and look over again

again the old Evidences which we formerly searched; wherein I doubt not, we shall find this Truth most clearly contained. And the Testimony of the WORD, you know, as well as that of the FATHER, was *threefold*; once to St. Stephen, a second time to St. Paul, and a third to this beloved Disciple St. John.

I.

For the First of these, it stands upon record in so many words, that St. Stephen being full of the Holy Ghost, and looking up stedfastly to heaven, *saw the heavens opened, and beheld the glory of God, and Jesus standing at his right hand.* vii. Act. 55, 56. Thus he declares, not to some simple people, who perhaps might believe him for his confidence, but to the great Councill of *Jerusalem*, who he knew were very much disaffected, nay perfectly opposite, to this truth. To them he protests in open Court, when he was upon his triall, and bids them mark it, (*'Idē, Behold*, take notice of what I now tell you,) *I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.* And he said it, though he knew he stood in certain perill of his life for

this declaration. It was for no other reason that *Jesus* himself was put to death, but because he said He was the *Son of God*; and that they should see the *Son of man* sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. And therefore for him to confirm so peremptorily this odious Truth, after they had killed Him, and thereby make them guilty of innocent blood, yea of the blood of their great King, was a Crime he might well expect they would punish with as great severity as was in their power to express: which we may be confident he would never have provoked, had he not been so sure of the Glory of our Saviour, that he could not hold his peace. For who is there so frantick, as to expose himself to death for such an unprofitable lie? It is not in the nature of man to suffer so shamefully as he did in his own person, merely to bring a little false honour to another. To fancy a person of his Wisdom guilty of such madness, is a kind of distraction in him that supposes it; who, were he sober, would be taught otherwise by the abhorrence he feels in himself to throw away his life for a trifle.

Since

Since there is not the least reason then to question, but that this Holy man beheld *the glory of God, and Jesus standing at his right hand*, (i. e. the gates of Heaven being set open, that he might have the favour to look into the celestiall palace, the *Majesty of God* was there represented to him sitting on a Throne, as it used to be in the propheticall Visions; and he beheld the Lord *Jesus* the very next person to the Divine Majesty:) we may clearly see in this Vision both the things that St. *John* here asserts, viz. that Eternall Life is in *Jesus* the Son of God, to give to those that effectually believe on his Name.

I. As for the first, the *power* wherewith he is invested to give Eternall LIFE, it is visible from his *standing at God's right hand*: which denotes his Omnipotent Virtue to effect what he pleases. For by the *right hand of God* *Jesus* himself was exalted to the right hand of power, as you reade ii. *Act*. 33. v. 31. and therefore being placed there, it signifies that he can doe for us what God hath done for him; that is, exalt us to the like glory in the heavens where he is. And as this is a clear proof of one of the things

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things here recorded, that *LIFE is in him*,
so the other,

II. That God hath given the faithfull a right to this Eternall LIFE with him, and that he *will* bestow it on us, is no less evident from the very End of this Vision. For we can see no other reason of this glorious appearance of our Saviour to him, but to incourage him in his preaching, and incite him to witnes a good confession, as he himself had done before this great Councill and before *Pontius Pilate*; in hope that if it cost him his life, as it had done our Saviour, he should live and reign with him in that glorious place where he now beheld him. This was the purpose of the heavenly WORD's coming now to him, that he might not doubt of his promises, nor shrink in the least from what he had preached, though he should die for it; which would doe him no greater harm then to dispatch him presently to the celestiall habitations. In the very beginning of his history we reade, that he had no sooner heard the Indictment read which they had drawn up against him, but, before he spake a word for himself, the whole Council *beheld his face as it had been the face of an Angel.*

Angel. vi. Act. 15. There appeared, that is, such a bright and sweet Majesty in his countenance, as made him look like one of the celestial inhabitants, who had already prevented the glorious state to which he was going. And his Answer to their charge being ended, their barbarous rage was not more apparent, then it was that the heavens opened to receive his Spirit, and let it into the dwelling of God, as soon as he should put off his mortality.

There he beheld *Jesus standing* (whereas he is commonly represented as *sitting*) at God's right hand; that he might know, He was ready to meet his Spirit, and entertain it into his heavenly mansions; as well as that He was coming to destroy his persecutors, and put an end to their power and nation. And he saw also the *Glory of God*, as the Crown he should win by his Martyrdom: which had as sensible an effect upon his heart for the confirming of his faith and constancy, as if he had heard the Almighty call to him and say, Μὴ ὀλιγοῦς ᾖς, Ὁ Στεφάνε, Be not faint-hearted, O Stephen, nor suffer any degenerate thoughts to enter into thy breast. Though there is no man to stand by thee,

no

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no Friend on earth to assist thee in this distressed season ; yet I with my beloved Son behold what is a doing. A happy Rest and repose is ready for thee. The gates of Paradise stand wide open to thee. Have patience a while, and, leaving this temporary life, make hast to that which is eternall. Still thou seest God is in humane Nature ; a thing beyond all worldly thoughts. Thou hast been taught by the Apostles, that the Father hath a genuine beloved Son : behold, I shew him to thee, as much as thou canst bear. And he stands at my right hand ; that by the very site of the place thou mayst know the dignity he hath. It was a scandall heretofore to many, that God should be on the Earth cloathed with flesh. But behold him now with me on high in a celestially, supercelestially condition, still having the form of man ; to confirm thee in the belief of the gracious dispensation which is now compleated. Be not disturbed, be not dejected, though for his sake thou beest stoned. Beholding the Dispenser of Rewards, do not fear the combate. Forsake thy body, and despising it as an earthly Prison, as a ruinous house, as a potter's vessel easily broken, come, run hither, being set at liberty, to the portion and inheritance here reserved for thee. For the crown of brave atchievements

is

is ready and expects thee. Step over from the earth to heaven, and take it. Leave thy body to the bloody murtherers, as a morsel to dogs. Leave the mad enraged multitude, and come to the quire of Angels.

In these words *Asterius* expresses the sense of this heavenly Vision, wherein God shewed himself to this valiant man, that he might not be struck with any fear by the greatness of the danger. For this cause he did not send an Angel to assist him, as to the Apostles in prison, nor any ministring power and fellow-servant, as he speaks; *ἡμεῖς αὐτὸν ἐνισχυόμεθα*, but he presented himself; that being the *first-fruits* of the Martyrs, he might leave a noble example to all that followed. And indeed what could more incourage them, then to hear so holy a man departing the world with these words in his mouth, *I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God?* This was a notable Testimony which the heavenly WORD gave, that he was possessed of ETERNALL LIFE; whereby he animated this blessed Martyr, from what he saw Him enjoy, to doe as He had done. Which could have no force in it to persuade him, unless his meaning had been,

*Encomium
in Proto-
martyr.*

been, that he should no sooner leave the World, but ascend up thither where he was. And so St. Stephen understood it; for as they were stoning him (the greatest punishment the Jews could inflict) he called upon our Saviour, saying, *Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit.* vii. *Act.* 59. He doubted not of audience, when he beheld him who is *sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high,* i. *Heb.* 3. in another posture; not sitting, but standing there. *What was the business (to use the words of another ancient Bishop) that made him rise thus out of his Father's throne? He saw this noble Combatant in his Agony, and rose up to crown his victory. And it was as if he had said, Fear not, Stephen; there is none shall beguile thee of thy reward. I am risen out of my throne, to reach thee my right hand. Beholding me who was crucified, grapple with the danger that presents it self to thee. I am he whom thou sawest hanging on a tree: by virtue of that crucifixion I will reward thee. I preside in these Combats, and deal the Crowns to Conquerours. Fear not therefore those that go about to stone thee; they do but rear thee a ladder, against their wills, to heaven. Do not fear them; the stones will be but as so many steps to that blessed place where thou seest me.*

Proclms
Orat. xvii.

me. It is not for thee to fear the stones,
who art built on me the chief Corner-stone;
and therefore canst not fare worse then I
do, who am in glory for ever and ever.

With such thoughts as these this good
Man laid down his life: which is as great
an argument as any of this nature can be,
that Jesus both can and will give *Eternall*
Life to his followers. For else a person so
full of Wisdom that they were not able
to dispute with him, (vi. *Act. 10.*) would
not have ventured his life, and endured
the worst of deaths, having nothing to
comfort him in his agony but onely the
hope he had from Jesus, that he would
receive his Spirit. This was it that gave
him such boldness and full assurance of
faith. With these words in his mouth he
would have died, but that he pitied those
who did not see as much as he did. Which
made him expire in prayer for his perse-
cutours; wishing them no worse, then
that they might not be hindred by this
sin from believing in Jesus, and going
thither where he hoped presently to be
received.

So the same *Asterius* rightly under-
stands those words, *LORD, lay not this*
sin

sin to their charge. He doth not wish them absolute impunity, which had been openly to oppose τῇ τοῦ Θεοῦ διαταγῇ the Divine Ordinance and constitution, and to correct the judgment and decree of the most Just, who hath appointed a deserved punishment to murtherers: but he begs of God that, notwithstanding this crime, he would give them true compunction, and bring them to repentance. It being as if he had said, *Do not let them die in their uncircumcision. Draw them by repentance to the acknowledgment of thee. Kindle the flame of the Spirit in their hearts. By the means of my blood let them be converted; that being washed in the laver of thy grace and in thy blood, they may be delivered from their iniquities.* A most pious conclusion of this bloody Tragedy; one of the principal Actours in which was presently after so miraculously touched from heaven, that it was visible our Lord had heard the devout prayer of his Martyr in this particular: and therefore had not denied his other request, but received his Spirit also unto himself.

II.

For if any thing could be clearer then this to demonstrate the truth I am endeavouring

yearning to prove, the great love of our most Blessed Lord would not deny it. Who appear'd again, as I shew'd in the former Treatise, to a very learned person, of great note and great sanctity among the Jews, and as great an enemy to him; being *consenting* (as he himself confesses, *xxii. Act. 20.*) *unto his death, when the blood of his Martyr Stephen was shed.* St. Paul I mean, who travelling towards *Damascus* in a burning rage and fury, and with a sharp commission, against Christians, (and therefore in no fit disposition to receive a truth, or to fall into a fancy directly opposite to his present temper and interest,) was suddenly surprized with a great light from heaven; and beheld that *Jesus*, whom he no more thought to be so glorious, then he did the Thieves that were crucified with him, presenting himself, and distinctly speaking to him, in such a splendid manner, that *he fell down to the ground, and could not see for the glory of that light: vers. 7, 11.* Whosoever will carefully observe what he was, and how far, as I said, from any such thoughts, and how desperately he had been lately ingaged against St. Stephen, and now was prosecuting other of *Christ's* Disciples, will easily conclude that he had

Q

now

now a reall sight of the Majesty of the Lord *Jesus* at whose feet he fell; whom otherwise no man should have despised and blasphemed more then He. Now if the Vision be considered, you will find that it contains in it this Truth, that *Jesus* *is possessed of Eternall Life to give unto us;* as well as that he is the *Son of God*. For,

I. He beheld him appearing in such a brightness as that before mentioned, far exceeding the splendour of the Sun at noon-day, according as he himself tells the story, xxvi. *Act*. 13. Which plainly declared him to be the King of Glory, cloathed with the Majesty of God, and possessed of an heavenly Kingdom; and therefore able to give ETERNALL LIFE to his servants: which is one of the things that St. *John* here saith God hath testified to us. How should he come by such a robe of light, and how should he appear thus, first to St. *Stephen*, and now to St. *Paul*, and how should he present himself thus near to him, and perfectly astonish his bold spirit, if he had not power to doe what he pleased? And therefore St. *Paul* is told by our Lord, at this very time when he saw him in such Majesty, that he should be a witness of what he had seen. Which had

had been to no purpose, unless this Apparition had something remarkable in it, to prove that he was what he pretended to be in his life-time, the Son of God most High, whom, according to his word which he passed by a voice from heaven, *he had glorified, and given him power over all flesh.*

II. And accordingly you find that the thing St. Paul witnessed was, that *Jesus was over all, God blessed for ever, (ix. Rom. 5.)* and had sent him to preach the Resurrection, and everlasting life. *xiii. Act. 46. xvii. 18.* These doctrines our Lord himself had taught him, when, appearing and speaking to him in such a glorious light, he said, *I am Jesus.* As much as to say, *I am he whom you buffeted; whom you scourged; whom you dragged about, first to Caiaphas, then to Pilate; whom you called continually the Carpenter's son; whom you number among the dead, laughing aloud at those that preach the Resurrection. It is I that speak: and therefore believe that which my servant Stephen saw; though when he told you so you would not believe it.*

Asterius
εἰς κορυ-
φαιὸν Ἀπε-
στόλου, &c.

Thus he learnt, saith Asterius, by experience, that *Christ* was alive; and was
Q-2 neither

neither corrupted by death, nor stollen away secretly by his Disciples, but risen from the dead, *καὶ βασιλεὺς ὢν ὅλων*, and reigned over the whole world. This he preached with as great a zeal, as before he persecuted. He was such an Auxiliary, as before he had been an enemy; *ἰσχυρὸς ἀντίπαρος*, both, strong and resolute.

III. For you may observe, that he did not merely rationally conclude from the glory wherein *Jesus* was, that all he had said was true, and that he was able to give *Everlasting Life*: but he heard him also say expressly at this time, when he appeared to him, that he would bestow this celestial Inheritance upon us, even *us* Gentiles, who were strangers to the promises, foreiners and aliens from the Commonwealth of *Israel*, having no such hope. There was nothing against which the Pharisaicall spirit was more imbittered then this, that other Nations should share with them and be equall to them in the blessings of the *Messiah*. The Religion wherein *St. Paul* had been bred was concerned in no principle more then this, that the rest of the world were all unclean, and never to be united to them; unless they would be circumcised, and observe the

the Law of *Moses*. And therefore had he not been pressed with undeniable evidence, he would never have consented to this truth, which was so much against the grain of that spirit which possessed him ; and which he but once mentioning to his Country-men, they were ready to tear him in pieces. xxii. *Act*. 21, 22. And yet he reports this for a certain Truth from the mouth of *Jesus* himself, who bad him (as he relates this glorious Vision to *Agrippa*, a Prince well skilled in the Law,) go unto the Gentiles, *to open their eyes,* (as He had done his,) *to turn them from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God ; that they might receive forgiveness of sins, and INHERITANCE among them that are sanctified by faith in him.* xxvi. *Act*. 17, 18. And accordingly he went and preached every-where, in obedience to this heavenly Vision, the comfortable doctrine of the Resurrection and Eternall Life, to us Gentiles as well as others : *witnessing both to small and great that, as the Prophets had foretold, Christ ought to suffer, and should be the first that should rise from the dead, and shew LIGHT unto the people (of Israel, that is,) and to the Gentiles : vers. 22, 23.* By *Light* in the holy language is meant the

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gladsome discovery of God's good will and pleasure. For as by *Darkness* it expresses ignorance, sorrow and heaviness; so by its opposite, knowledge, joy and cheerfulness. And the *Light* which we have by *Christ's* sufferings and rising from the dead, can be nothing else but the blessed hope of immortality. This *St. John* tells us is the *light* of mankind: (i. 4. *In him was LIFE, and the life was the LIGHT of men*; that is, their singular comfort and satisfaction, which makes their life not to be irksome to them :) and with this *Light* *St. Paul* endeavoured to fill the world, that they might all know how much they were indebted to *Jesus*, who brought *Life and immortality to light by his Gospel*.

And can it enter into any man's thoughts, that he *would* have set himself to preach this doctrine of happiness to us, (which his own people so abhorred we should partake of,) if God the WORD had not made him infallibly assured of it? Nay, how *could* he have preached it so long, unless, as he there speaks, he had *obtained help of God*; who countenanced his preaching, and approved this testimony of his concerning his Son *Jesus*, by the mighty

mighty power of the Holy Ghost? He himself also testified the strong belief he had of the Resurrection, and of the Glory that shall be revealed, by his labouring so abundantly as he did in the work of the Lord; to whom he was desirous to express an extraordinary affection, because his grace and love had so abounded towards him. He thought he could never in the least requite his kindness; and therefore would not gain one farthing, not so much as a bit of bread, by this preaching: But, though he might have lived by the Gospel, chose rather to work with his own hands, to support himself and those that were with him; that he might win the more Souls to his Master, by making Religion without charge to them. A great argument of his zeal to serve his Lord, and promote his honour, and of his firm belief of immortall life, where he desired onely to have his services rewarded. Which is excellently expressed by the forenamed *Asterius*, when he says, that he refused so small a recompence of his infinite labours, as a daily provision for his body, which was so often beaten and bruised, *ἵνα μὴ ἐν τῇ γῆς λαβὼν, πίνοντες ἐν τοῖς ὕδασι ἀποθίσσῃ, that receiving nothing upon Earth, he might lay up all in Heaven.*

IV. And therefore you may observe, that his service was so acceptable to our Saviour, that he gratified him here in this world above our mortall condition: and to give him an earnest or pledge of the good things to come, and the honour should be done him there, he did him the favour to transport him into the *Third heaven*, and another time into *Paradise*; where he saw Visions and heard words too glorious for him to utter, or us to understand in this present state. 2 *Cor.* xii. 3, 4. This was a farther confirmation which the Eternall WORD gave of his power to give *Eternall Life*, and of his intentions to take us up unto himself. For he was carried thus above the clouds by the power and favour of *Jesus*; who hereby bare witness to himself how glorious he is, and how able to advance his faithfull Disciples to the same height of heavenly felicity. For he says it was a *man in Christ*, one who by the happiness of belonging to him had this noble privilege bestowed on him: And he gives this as an instance of the Visions and Revelations *as* *Kue's* of the LORD, (ver. I.) which is the title of *Jesus* most frequently in the New Testament, who *is* LORD

of

of all. x. Act. 36. He snatcht him up into the Heavens. He transported him, no body knows how, to the celestiall habitations. And either by a $\pi\epsilon\rho\sigma\delta\theta$, ἢ ἀνέβασας, ἀνελήνυσ, (as St. Greg. Naz *. distinguishes them,) a rapture of mind in the body, or the ascension of his mind quite out of the body, or the assumption of both for a time into those regions above, he let him see strange sights, and hear such words as are not to be spoken with our tongues. Which was a very full demonstration of the Majesty of our Blessed Saviour, and of his ability to translate us to those heavenly places, and of his purposes likewise to make us at last so happy.

* Orat. ii.
πρὸς ἑταί-
ρους, p.
550.

Behold here the glory of the Christian Religion, whose Authour is so highly exalted, that he exalts this Minister of his far above the greatest persons in former times. The translation of Elias (as the often named Asterius speaks *) out of this world wherein we are, is every-where celebrated as a wonder. But $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\chi\epsilon\iota\ \pi\acute{\omicron}\tau\epsilon\varsigma\ \epsilon\phi\acute{\omicron}\tau\alpha\tau$ how far he went, no Revelation hath explained. Perhaps he was not carried very high above the Earth by that power which lifted him up, to the place which was destined for his habitation. But the translation

Ib. εἰς κορυ-
θαῖς Ἀπο-
στόλου, &c.

of

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of St. Paul was far more illustrious and famous; the very place being noted to which he was carried: and that no inferiour one, but almost half way to the highest heavens of all. Let the Hebrews hereafter cease to pride themselves in the honour that was done to Moses; who alone went up to the top of mount Sinai, and was in the midst of the clouds and darkness which appeared there. My Paul, in stead of a mountain, ascended into heaven; and in stead of a cloud, was carried beyond the air that is above the clouds. And very fitly; for it became a Man of Christ to outstrip Moses as much, as the Old Law was excelled by the Gospell that St. Paul preached: which he calls the Mystery hid from ages and generations, but now made manifest to the Saints, (or Christians) to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in us, the hope of glory. i. Col. 26, 27.

III.

And here now let us leave the history of this great Man, and pass to the *Third* Testimony which the WORD gave of this truth, to St. John. Who as he is the one-ly

ly person that (after the other Evange-
lists had set down the genealogy of our
Lord according to the flesh) expounds
τὴν ἀναρχὴν ὑπαρξίν τῷ Θεῷ λόγῳ, as *Proclus* *
speaks, the Eternall subsistence without
any beginning of God the WORD, and
his generation of the Father before all
worlds: so he hath gathered here together,
more clearly then any of the rest, all the
Evidences and grounds of the Christian
Faith; and also received the most full and
pregnant demonstrations of what he hath
particularly recorded, concerning *Eter-
nall life in the Son of God*. For when
our Blessed Lord, (the WORD made
flesh,) whom he beheld ascending into
heaven, appeared to him from thence in
a most glorious manner, you may ob-
serve,

I. That he sufficiently declares his pow-
er to doe what he pleases, by taking to
himself that very Name and Title where-
by God the Father Almighty sometimes
revealed himself to the Prophets. You
reade in the xli. *Isa.* 4. xliv. 6. the Lord,
the King of *Israel*, and his Redeemer, saith,
I am the first and the last: which is the ve-
ry same with those words i. *Rev.* 8. *I am
Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the
ending,*

* οὗτος τὸ
ἀρχὸν Πα-
τρός.

ending, saith the Lord, &c. those two being the names of the *first* and the *last* letters in the Greek Alphabet, as *A* and *Z* are the first and last in our Christ-cross-row. Now if you look farther into this book of the *Revelation*, you will find that in this very style our Blessed Lord speaks of himself. In the very beginning of the Visions there recorded, St. John heard one call to him with a loud voice, as of a trumpet, saying, *I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last*: (i. Rev. II.) and turning about to see who it was that spake to him, our Saviour appeared in the form and shape of a King and Priest shining in glory, as you reade vers. 12, 13, &c. And thus he concludes his Revelation as he had begun: xxii. 13, 16. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, &c. I Jesus have sent my Angel to testify unto you these things in the Churches.* Which is a demonstrative argument that *Eternall Life* is in him, and that he wants no power to effect any thing he hath promised; being equall to the Father Almighty, whose Name else he would not have assumed.

II. And if we examine the sense and meaning of this Name, we shall still be farther
con-

convinced, that he will undoubtedly imploy his power to bestow upon us that Eternall Life which is in him. For when the Almighty calls himself *the First and the Last*, he either declares that he is the E T E R N A L L, who gave being to all things, and remains after they are all dead and gone : or else, (as *Oecolampadius* and *Calvin* understand those words in *Isaiah*,) that he is the I M M U T A B L E, from first to last constant to himself and his promises. Which is the gloss of R. *Solomon* upon the words ; who refers them to the help and assistance which God would give to the last as well as the first of *Abraham's* children. What he had been to *Israel*, the same he would still be. He had at the first taken them to be his people ; and therefore in the latter days he would still own them, and shew his speciall affection to them.

I see no reason why these two expositions should be thought so inconsistent, as to exclude one the other ; when they may both be very well joyned together. And then our Lord intends by the assumption of this Title, that St. *John* and all the Christian Churches should look upon him as the Eternall God, able to per-

perpetuate his love and mercy towards them world without end ; and as alway the same unchangeable Wisdom and Goodness, whose mind and will is no more alterable then his power , but remains as firmly fixed as God the Father Almighty doth. So that look what God the Father now is or hath been, or what himself hath ever been to the body of his Church ; the same He will still continue immutably to our endless happiness. If God the Father was, and is, and will be the *Alpha* or beginning ; the same is He likewise. All things come from him to his Church, of which he is the Founder ; by him it subsists and continues ; and he hath such a creative power in him, that he can give all blessings, even *Life everlasting*, to it. For though we die, yet he is the *Omega*, who remains still in being after all the world is buried in its ruines ; and therefore can quicken our dust and ashes, and gather them up to himself, and make them glorious. God the Father raised him from the dead, and gave him glory : and therefore, seeing He hath the same power, (as appears by these titles,) He can doe as much for us, and give us a glorious resurrection. In this God the Father faithfully fulfilled the promises he had

had made him, of glorifying him with himself : and therefore we may be confident he will be as true to us, and make good all the promises he hath left us for our incouragement in his obedience; because he is perfectly such as his Father is.

And, to come a little nearer to that interpretation which Rabbi *Solomon* gives of the words of the Prophet, (where this expression is first used,) our Lord would have us think that, as God the Father Almighty, having begun to shew mercy and favour to *Israel*, would not fail to go on and continue the same kindness to the end : so He, being likewise the ALPHA, having begun, that is, to raise himself a Church, and to doe great things for it, even to die and purchase it with his blood, would undoubtedly be the OMEGA, finish, that is, his own work, and bring that of which he had laid the foundation to an happy conclusion ; never ceasing his kindness, till he had perfected his Saints in that Life he had begun to bestow upon them. Or, as he began in this world to raise men from the dead, to bestow upon them other great benefits, to make them very precious promises of
greater

greater favours, and to seal them with his blood : so he would have them rest assured, he would continue to the end to doe them good, and at the last raise all his faithfull servants from the dead, and take them up to live with himself; and in the mean time perform every other promise he had made, for their present satisfaction and support in this troublesome world. As he died for them, so he would have them make account he lived for them; because he is always the same, at last the very same that he was at first : And therefore *since he lives, they might expect to live also.*

III. But he did not leave them merely to draw these inferences themselves from that great Name whereby he now made himself known to St. *John*; but immediately, after he had told who he was, he more clearly and particularly declares this very thing, that he hath *Life in himself.* For you read that St. *John*, beholding him in such glory, with a countenance as bright as the Sun when it shineth in its strength, (which was a sight too strong for our weak eyes to look upon, i. *Rev.* 16.) *fell at his feet, as one dead.* He was as much astonished at his
pre-

presence, though he knew *Jesus* loved him, as *St. Paul* was, while he was a persecutour of him. Which shews that our Lord appeared now in a most amazing glory; too splendid for the capacity of his best Friends to endure long, without the danger of ceasing to be men. For so far were those words which our Lord spake from giving him life, that, like to those who heretofore beheld the glory of God, he was more astonished at what he saw, then comforted with what he heard; and thought, it is probable, he should die presently and give up the ghost. But in this trembling fit *Jesus* was pleased graciously to approach, and laying his right hand on him, bad him *not* fear, nor let that Majesty of God which he beheld in him cast him into such a great consternation. "It is true indeed, (says he; vers. 17.) *I am the first and the last*, as I said before; that is, am invested with all the power of God; bearing his Name and Authority: but there is so much comfort in this, that it ought rather to have transported thee with joy, then struck thee with terrour. For (as it there follows, vers. 18.) I, who call my self *Alpha* and *Omega*, the first and last, *am he that*
R "liveth,

" liveth, and was dead; I, the very same
 " person who loved thee and the rest of
 " mankind so well as to die for you, and
 " never made use of my power to your
 " hurt, am risen from the dead; and af-
 " ter all my sufferings (such as you must
 " endure for my sake) am alive, as thou
 " seest, and in a far better condition than
 " I was before, when thou wast not thus
 " afraid of me. Though in my first at-
 " tempt to raise a Church I suffered death,
 " and laid the foundation of it in my
 " blood: yet it is apparent I have over-
 " come death, and now live in greater
 " splendour than ever.

If our Lord had stopt here, and said no
 more, this had been sufficient to convince
 him of his power to present to himself a
 glorious Church; and from the lowest
 and most afflicted condition, to raise it to
 the greatest honour here, and to eternall
 glory in the other world. But he pro-
 ceeds for the stronger confirmation of his
 faith, and says, "*Behold*, more than this,
 " *I am alive for evermore. I have Eternall*
 " *Life*, and can never lose this power:
 " and therefore thou mayst believe me
 " when I say that I am the *Omega*, whom
 " thou knowest to be the *Alpha*; for I can
 " perfect

perfect what I have undertaken, and
bring to an happy issue all the good I
have begun to work for you. The
latest posterity shall find that I am a-
live, and able to promote them to ever-
lasting bliss. Fear not, these words are
all true, and therefore I conclude them
with an *AMEN*; (wherewith I was
wont, thou mayst remember, to con-
firm my sayings;) that thou mayst rest
assured I now say nothing but the cer-
tain indubitable truth, when I tell thee,
I am he that was dead, and now am
alive, and that I live for evermore.

Πῶς εἰς οὖν τί σε παθεῖν π κακὸν ἐν τῷ ὀνηρωμένῳ μου;
(as *Andreas Casariensis* conceives his
meaning,) How canst thou imagine
then that thou art in danger to suffer
any harm by my appearing to thee, since
the power which thou seest me have
is to give life, not death, unto my ser-
vants? I never used, thou mayst re-
member, to kill men, but to save
them; and therefore thus thou mayst
be confident I will still imploy my om-
nipotent power; for I am *Alpha and*
Omega, the same at last that I was at
first: I am come that you might have
life, and that you might have it more
abundantly.

R 2

“ And

“ And indeed, as he still goes on, I
 “ *have the keys of hell and of death*; or (as
 “ we render the word *Advs*, here transla-
 “ *ted hell*, in 1 Cor. xv. 55.) *the keys of*
 “ *the grace and of death*. I can open
 “ the graves, as I did at my death, and
 “ can loose the bands of death, as I did at
 “ my resurrection. I can bring you out
 “ of that dark estate where no body sees
 “ you, and restore you to life again;
 “ nay, raise you to that Light wherein
 “ thou beholdest me shine.

And here again it is observable, that
 our Saviour takes to himself that very
 power which is ascribed to Almighty God
 by *Hannah*; who says in her Song, 1 Sam.
 ii. 6. *The Lord killeth, and maketh alive,*
he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth
up. Whereby he would suggest to St. *John*,
 that all things are committed to his trust,
 and are in his power: (for that is fre-
 quently denoted in the holy language by
Keys, the badge of a Steward's authori-
 ty and power in a family:) and therefore
 it is not too hard for him to overcome the
 great Conquerour of all men, to open the
 prison-doors that have been so long shut
 and fast locked, to loose the chains of
 death,

death, and overthrow him quite who hath the power of it, that is, the Devill. But this he would have us stedfastly believe, and therefore immediately bids him (not lie as a man dead, but get up and) *write the things that thou hast seen: ver. 19.* That is, "Let my Church know that I am
"alive, and that I bear the same affection
"to them that I ever had. Send them
"this comfort from me, that I not onely
"live, but always live, and have all pow-
"er committed to me, even over the
"grave and death: so that if any man
"lose his life for me, I can give it him a-
"gain, with such an increase of dignity
"and glory as thou seest me enjoy.

And we must needs confess that there is an exceeding great comfort in this assurance, which he gave thus in his own person and with his own mouth to this holy Apostle; who knows, as he speaks in another case, xix. *Joh. 35. that he saith true.* For hereby we rest satisfied of one part of the Record which is to be proved, that *Life is in Jesus*; and see moreover much reason to believe the other part, that *he intends to bestow it on us.*

IV. But for a fuller evidence of that, you may consider, in the last place, that this WORD of God gave frequent testimonies of it to St. *John* in the following Letters to the Seven Churches of *Asia*. Where they are so obvious, that I may leave it to the most careless hand to gather them. To one he saith, *I will give to him that overcometh to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.* ii. Rev. 7. To another, *I will give him a crown of life : and, He shall not be hurt of the second death :* ver. 10, 11. To a third, *I will give him the white Stone, &c.* a certain knowledge and assurance, *i. e.* (as I hope to shew in another place,) of the promised reward : ver. 17. To another, *He shall be cloathed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the booke of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels :* iii. 5. And, to name no more, he promises to grant to him that overcometh, *to sit down with him in his throne :* ver. 21. Which, though it may have some respect to the high place and dignity he should enjoy in the Church in this world, yet, had not its full completion but in the other life; where he will crown the fidelity

lity of all victorious Souls with the greatest glory and honour.

How can we doubt of it, when we hear such express promises of immortall bliss so oft repeated, from the mouth of the WORD of God himself, after he went to heaven? Great is our assurance, great is the confidence we may take from such a *Record* as this; if we be in the number of those that *overcome*: remain constant, that is, and fixed in our Christian resolution, notwithstanding any assaults that are made upon us, either by the good or bad things of this world, to tempt us to revolt from our duty. For St. *John* saw and heard these things from the Lord *Jesus* himself, upon his own Day, (the day of his resurrection from the dead;) and in a glory so bright, that it was an emblem of the happiness he will bestow upon us; and with such earnest asseverations of their truth and certainty, as are sufficient to awake the dullest and most lethargick Souls to attend to what he says. For thus he begins his Letter to the Church of *Laodicea*, who were grown strangely chill and indevout, *These things saith the Amen, the faithfull and true Witness, the beginning of the Creation of God.* iii. 14.

By the name of A M E N, which he gives himself, he would have them understand, that by him all the promises made to the Church shall undoubtedly be fulfilled; according to that of St. Paul, 2 Cor. i. 20. *In him all the promises of God are Yea, and in him Amen.* "He may
 "be believed, for he is a *Witness* who
 "affirms and testifies nothing but the ve-
 "ry truth, which can never fail: because
 "he is the Efficient cause of all things, by
 "whom they were at first created, and by
 "whom mankind is now repaired; and
 "therefore is the Head of all creatures,
 "especially of all Christians, who shall
 "rise again from the dead to immortall
 "life. So I expound the last words, [*the beginning of the Creation of God,*] as *Andreas Cæsariensis* doth; who takes in both senses of the word 'Αρχη, (as I have of the word *Creation,*) which signifies not only *Principium*, the beginning or originall, but *Principatum*, the principality or dominion which the Son of God hath over all creatures, of which he is the Author. What may we not expect from so great a Prince, who hath such an absolute command over all things? And why should we doubt of his Sovereignty,
 who

who appeared in such an amazing splendour to St. *John*, and proclaimed in these and other such like Titles the supereminent glory of his Majesty? Or why should we question his truth, who had approved himself so many ways *the true and faithful Witness*; especially by sending the Holy Ghost (as you shall hear presently) to bear witness to him, according to his promise? We ought to rely upon his word; and to fear nothing, but lest we should reject or distrust the testimony of a Person so great and so just; whose power appeared, from his very first entrance into the world, to be so far transcending all creatures, that the Apostles might see before his ascension to the glory wherein St. *John* beheld him, that as he had the *Words of eternall Life*, so he had that *Life in himself*, which in due time he would bestow upon them.

For though He had all the passions of a man, yet he had all the perfections likewise of God: that none might be so profanely contumelious, as to contemn his Deity, because he took upon him the grossness of our Humanity. He was born of a woman; but she a Virgin: that was humane, this Divine. He was wrapt in swaddling-cloaths when

Greg. Naz.
Zianz. o-
rat. XXXV.
p. 575.

when he was an infant ; but shaked off the cloaths that wrapt him in the sepulchre when he was dead. He was laid in a manger ; but then glorified by Angels, pointed to by a Star, and worshipped by the Wise men. He was driven into Egypt ; but there drove away the errours of the Egyptians. The Jews saw no beauty in him ; but he shone upon the mountain brighter then the Sun, prefiguring the glory to which he should ascend. He was baptized and tempted, as Man ; but he took away the Sins of the World, and got the victory, as God. He was hungry ; but fed many thousands, and is himself the heavenly Bread which giveth life. He was thirsty ; but gave the waters of life, and made rivers of living waters flow from those that believed on him. He was called a Samaritan, and they said he had a Devill ; but he put Devills to flight, and tumbled whole legions of them into the deep, and made the Prince of Devills fall like lightning from heaven. He was sold for thirty pieces of silver ; but purchased the whole World with the great price of his own blood. He was led as a sheep to the slaughter ; but was the Shepherd of Israel, and now is of all the World. He was dumb as a lamb before the shearers ; but is the WORD preached by the voice of one crying in the wilder-

wilderness. He was wounded and bruised; but healed every sickness and all manner of disease. He was lifted up on the tree, and there fixed; but restored us to the tree of life, and saved the thief who was crucified with him. He laid down his life; but had power to take it again, and the veil rent, the rocks were cleft, and the dead were raised. He died; but he gives life, and by death extinguished death. He was buried; but rose again out of the grave. He went down into hell; but he brought up Souls with him, and ascended into heaven, and will come again, to judge the quick and the dead, and to examine all such discourses as detract from his glory.

O my Soul, for ever praise him, and let thy heart rejoyce in his holy Name. Love him as thy Life; confide in his word; depend on his power; and expect from him the blessing of Eternall Life. For he is the AMEN, the faithfull and true witness, who cannot lie; the beginning of the Creation of God, whom all Creatures without a voice confesse to be their Lord. The Heavens cry, that it was God who bowed them, and came down to be a man for our sakes. The Sun cries, It was my Lord who was crucified in the flesh; at the

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the light of whose Divinity I was afraid, and withdrew my beams. The Earth cries, It was He that formed me, who suffered; which made me quake and tremble at the horrid fact. The Sea cries, He was not my fellow-servant who walkt, with one of his Disciples, upon my back. The Temple cries, He that was worshipped here is now blasphemed; and therefore I rend my garments. Nay, Hell cries, He was not a mere man who descended hither; for whom I received as a Captive, I found to be the Omnipotent God. And if we ask the heavenly powers, and desire the Angels and Archangels and the whole host of heaven to tell us, Who was he that appeared on earth, and was crucified in the flesh? they will all answer aloud, in the words of the Prophet David; The Lord, the God of hosts, he is the King of Glory. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

*Concerning the Testimony of the
HOLY GHOST, the
Third Witness in Heaven.*

NOW I proceed to examine the Testimony which the Third Witness in Heaven gave concerning this future state; which is the **HOLY GHOST**, the Third Person in the Blessed Trinity. Who openly assures us, by as many ways and by the same means, that we *have eternal Life in Christ Jesus*, as he did that *Jesus is the Son of God*. And, that I may not be tedious in a business wherein we have already received such satisfaction, let us take but a small taste of those *three Testimonies* of the Holy Ghost, which I alledged in the former Treatise.

I.

And *first*, you know that there was a visible appearance of the **HOLY GHOST** at our Saviour's Baptism: when the Di-
vine

vine Glory came down from heaven, and rested on him in the sight of *John* the Baptist; whereby he was persuaded that this was the *Messiah*, the King of *Israel*. And if we carefully enquire into it, we shall find it to have been as clear a Witness, that it is in his power and in his purpose to give *Eternall Life* to all his faithfull subjects.

I. For *first*, the very end of its appearing was to invest him with the highest office and dignity; which from this time he took upon him and exercised, whereas before he had lived as a private person. So you reade x. *Act*. 38. that he was *anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power*. Which being a ceremony whereby Kings are created, we are to understand that by the coming down of the HOLY GHOST he was appointed our Lord and Sovereign; one part of whose office is, to bestow rewards on those that doe him good and faithfull service. Now *his Kingdom not being of this World*, as he professed, and as was apparent by his life and death; and yet he constantly asserting that he was a King, and exercising severall acts of Royall Authority, as I have formerly proved; we must conclude, that by this
Unction

Unction he was designed to be a King in the heavens : where he disposes of all places and preferments, and will promote all his loyall subjects to the greatest honours and dignities.

There is no reason to doubt of it, for the *Glory of the Lord* which at his Baptism descended on him, so as it had never done on any man, was the *Seal*, or, if you will, the *Crown* of God upon him ; which markt him to be the Lord of Glory, from whom we may expect the blessing of Eternall Life. The very opening also of the Heavens, at the descent of the HOLY GHOST upon him, signified as much, (as St. *Chrysostom* thinks,) and was a plain declaration of the exceeding great favour of God towards us. Who now opened to us, as he speaks *, τὰς πύλας τὰς ἄνω, those gates above ; and sent the Spirit from thence to call us to our celestially Country : and not simply to call us, but with the greatest prerogative : for he hath not made us Angels and Archangels, but making us the Sons of God and his beloved Sons, so he draws us to that heavenly portion.

* Homil. xii. in Mattheum.

II. Which

II. Which we may with the greater confidence expect, because the **HOLY GHOST**, as I observed heretofore, not onely came down upon him; but *rested*, or took up its abode in him. It did not onely overshadow him, as the Glory of the Lord did the blessed Virgin; but descending on him settled it self in him as its habitation: insomuch that every day one might see the Glory of the Lord shining in him. Thus *John Baptist*, who was a carefull observer of it, relates in *i. Joh. 32, 33.* where he twice takes notice of the *abiding* and the *resting* of the **HOLY GHOST** with him. In which

in xi. Isa. *Isaac Abarbinel* himself, a known enemy to *Jesus*, confesses the excellency of *Christ's* prophecy consists; This being one of the *Ten* privileges which the *Messiah*, he saith, shall be indued withall, that *the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him.* *xi. Isa. 2.* So it did upon our Saviour, (as an undoubted Prophet testified,) in whom all the *fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily*: and therefore He must needs have *Life in himself*; and out of his fulness, as *St. John* speaks, we may expect to receive *grace for grace.*

For

For he that had *John* baptize, you may farther consider, told him, that this person who had the HOLY GHOST not onely *descending* on him; but *residing* in him, was He that should baptize men with the Holy Ghost. Be a King, that is, in the heavens, and have all power committed to him; as he would demonstrate by sending the Holy Ghost upon others, as now it came upon him. And till that time came, it was as visible as the Light wherein the HOLY GHOST appeared, that it did inhabit in him, by the constant sensible effects of his Divine power every-where. St. *Luke*, as I observed in the First Part, remembers how he returned immediately from *Jordan*, where he was baptized; *full of the Holy Ghost*. iv. *Luk*. 1. As was manifest, not onely from a number of miraculous operations, but from the no-less wonderful wisdom whereby he spake, and opened the ancient Oracles of God. For to this end also he was anointed, (and herein he exercised the authority of a King,) as the very first place of the Prophetickall Books which he expounded clearly tells us. iv. *Luk*. 18, 19. Where you may note, that the great business for which he was

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anointed by the Spirit was, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. The time of grace, that is, wherein the good will and pleasure of God was shewn to the world; which consists principally in giving remission of sins, and eternall Life. This he came to proclaim and publish with the power of the HOLY GHOST; having all those divine gifts, mentioned in xi. *Isaiab*, to qualify him for this high office: *four* of which belong to the Mind, (and was well represented by that luminous body which came down upon him at his Baptism,) and *one* to the Will, and *another* to the power of action; viz. *Wisdome, Understanding, Counsel, Might, Knowledge, and the Fear of the Lord.* He was able on all occasions to speak most divinely, to teach as one that had authority, to evade all the secret plots which his adversaries had upon him, to search into their very hearts and desires, to shew the straight way to that bliss which he preached, to foil all the power of the Enemy, and to raise even the dead to life again. Which were evident demonstrations that the *Spirit of the Lord rested on him*, and made him the greatest Prophet that ever was; not onely the Preacher, but the Giver of ETERNALL LIFE.

III. For as by this power of the Holy Ghost it was manifest he *had Life in himself*; so God's intention to give this Life to us was apparent from the manner of its descent; which is said to have been *like a Dove*. The phrase, indeed, is dubious, and may signify onely, that this glorious Body which came down from heaven was, in its descent or falling, like the coming down of a Dove with its wings spread abroad. Yet since St. *Luke* saith that it came *in a bodily shape*; and the Church, though the words do not necessarily enforce it, hath thus understood it; we may most probably conclude, the word *Like* hath relation not onely to the *coming down*, but to the *Dove* it self: telling us, that the form or figure of this celestial glory which now appeared, carried the resemblance of that creature.

Now to think that this form was assumed without any design at all, would be very contrary to common reason: which leads us rather to conceive, that God would shew, at the very first entrance of our Saviour upon his office, by this known emblem of meekness and love, what great favour and kindness he intended to shew

to mankind; and with what a tender spirit of gentleness and sweetness our Lord should exercise the Ministry committed to him, towards the *poor*, and the *broken in heart*, and the miserable *captives*, to whom he preached the *acceptable year of the Lord*. Or else, as *St. Chrysostome's* words are, *He remembers us hereby of the old history*. For the whole World being once shipwreck'd, and humane kind being in great danger to be totally lost, this Creature appeared with an Olive-branch in her mouth, and brought them glad tidings that the tempest was over, and that there was now an universal calm.

Ἀπερ πάντα τῶν μελλόντων τύποι ἐν, *All which things were a type and figure of what was to come*. For now when the affairs of mankind were in a worse condition, and they were all in danger of a soarer punishment, the unspeakable grace of God in our Saviour steps in for our rescue. And therefore a Dove appeared again, not bringing an Olive-branch, but shewing us our Deliverer from all evill, and administering unto us good hopes. For it doth not bring merely one man and his family out of danger, but appeared to lead all the world to heaven; and, in stead of an Olive-branch, brought the adoption of Sons to all mankind. And
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where the dignity of this adoption is, there is the destruction of all evill things, and the gift of all things that are good. To the same purpose speaks *Theophylact*, who contracts his sense in fewer words. "As the Dove brought to Noah the news that the waters of the flood were gone; so now the HOLY GHOST brought the joyfull news of the doing away of Sin. There was an Olive-branch; and here was the mercy of God.

And thus *John Baptist* understood it, who having seen this sight cried out, *Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world*; that is, *Death* the punishment of Sin; and consequently restores us to immortall life. i. *Joh. 29, 30, &c.* This, he thought, declared God to be reconciled; and lookt upon it as a token that the heavens had laid aside their displeasure, and would be at peace with the sinfull sons of men. The windows, you know, of heaven were opened in the old World; but dark and pitchy clouds were all that appeared, which poured down nothing but a flood of rain upon mankind. Whereas now, quite contrary, when the heavens were opened again, there was no dismall sight presented it
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self,

self, but onely a pure light and glorious brightness shone from the face of God. And the HOLY GHOST in the form of a *Dove* appeared, not like that of *Noah* after the deluge had swept all mankind (very few excepted) from the face of the earth; but, to give notice to the World, that God would not take such vengeance upon men for their wickedness, but be graciously reconciled to them, by saving them from death, and giving them the blessing of Eternall Life. One might well gather as much from this sight; especially when there was such an *Olive-branch* of peace (if I may so call it) in the mouth of this Dove, as that voice from heaven which came along with it, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* One of these illustrates and explains the other: and both of them tell us, that the heavens now look upon us with a serene countenance; and that we are no longer shut out of them, but God is so well satisfied, that he will admit us into those celestiall habitations.

II.

This was farther declared afterward, when the Apostles, according to his promise,

promise, were on the day of Pentecost *baptized with the Holy Ghost*: whereby they were sent by him, as he was by the Father. Then the Heavens poured down such a large shewr of the Divine grace, as presently overflowed the World with a comfortable sense of E T E R N A L L L I F E. This was one great end of the coming of the HOLY GHOST, which then *witnessed* to our Saviour, and openly shew'd him to the World as the *Prince of life*. iii. *Act*. 15.

For, (1.) it was a plain demonstration that He whom the *Jews* had murdered was alive from the dead; and had not lost his power, which was so eminent in him all the while he was on earth, to doe good, and bestow benefits upon mankind. And (2.) the greatness of the benefit shews that he was greater in power then ever, having ennobled all his Servants, and raised men of the lowest condition to the highest dignities, by bestowing on them the gift of the HOLY GHOST. It was *his* gift, as he fore-told in his life-time, when he said, *I will send the Comforter from the Father*; xv. *Joh*. 26. and, *He shall receive of mine, and shew it unto you*: xvi. *Joh*. 14, 15. And there-

fore the *Holy Ghost* declared *his* greatness and power over all ; as *St. Peter* discourses in the very first Sermon he preached after our Saviour's resurrection on the day of Pentecost. ii. *Act.* 33. Where he tells the *Jews*, that what they saw and heard, and were amazed at, was shed forth and poured on them by *Jesus*, who had now received the promise of the *Holy Ghost*. And therefore, says he, ver. 36. *let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that Jesus whom ye crucified both Lord and Christ.* Which is as much as to say, You ought to look upon this as an undoubted argument that he is Lord of all things, (the *Christ* or King whom God the Father hath appointed,) because he hath sent such royall gifts to his servants as none but the Lord of the world could possibly bestow.

And by the way we may take notice, that the better sort of the *Jews* themselves expect the *Messiah* should bring such grace to men. For *Abarbinel*, in the place fore-mentioned, acknowledging Miraculous works to be a note whereby the *Messiah* shall be known, reckons this for one of them, *the effusion of the Spirit of God* spoken of by the Prophet *Joel*. Our
Lord

Lord therefore sending this down in a plentiful manner on the day of Pentecost, thereby manifested, if they would have seen it, that he had the mark of their King upon him; and indeed could doe that which they all confess is the Work of God alone, who onely can pour out the gifts which the Prophet there promises. There is no reason to question the power of such a King as this, to doe what he pleases; even to prefer his subjects to his heavenly Kingdom. They may be raised, when he thinks good, to reign with him above; as now they began to doe upon the earth. It depends upon his will alone to exalt them to that very place, from whence this mighty power of the Holy Ghost came down upon them.

But that we may be satisfied the HOLY GHOST was an expresse Witness of his being the *Prince of life*, (a King that hath Life in himself,) a *Prince and a Saviour*, (as it is v. *Act. 31.*) who can deliver men from the oppression of all their Enemies, the greatest of which is Death, you may consider, (3.) that the miraculous change which was wrought on a sudden in the minds of very ignorant men;

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is an evident argument what he can doe for our Souls in the other World. He inspired them with such Understanding by the power of the Holy Ghost, that the greatest Doctours in *Israel* were not able to resist the Wisedom whereby they spake. They understood clearly all the ancient Prophecies: There was no veil or cloud any longer upon them, but the *Holy Ghost* made them see the whole Mystery which was wrapt up in them. It revealed all Types; explained all Figures; led them into the Sanctuary and Most holy place; shew'd them the true meaning of the Mercy-seat; and laid all those things, which did but obscurely point at ETERNALL LIFE, so open and naked, that none could chuse but see, if he did not shut his eyes, they were not the same men that they had been but just before, and were made thus learned without any humane helps of instruction. A convincing argument of his power to raise our Minds when we depart this World, and have not the clouds of this Body before our eyes, to as great a pitch of knowledge as I discoursed of in the beginning of this Treatise. And the suddenness of this change was as clear an argument that he can doe it without difficulty;

culty ; and that there is not so great a distance between this present state and that which we expect, but he can presently translate us to it.

And (4.) this Knowledge, you may consider farther, being accompanied with a mighty Power, whereby the Holy Ghost inabled them not onely to give eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, health to the sick, but life also to the dead, (as was very well known in those days) was an undoubted testimony, that He from whom it came is able also to *change these vile bodies, and make them like to his own most glorious body.* For it is visible he hath a power, whereby he can *subdue all things to himself.* To take away life, you may think is no such great matter, that we should take any notice of it : yet to doe even this with a word for lying to the HOLY GHOST, was an argument of a mighty power residing in the Apostles. And when *Abarbinell* speaks of the power of the *Messiah* to work Miracles, from that Prophecy of *Isaiah xi.* he alledges these words to prove it ; (vers. 4.) *He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.* Which was never
literally

literally fulfilled during our Saviour's stay on Earth; (where he did nothing but good to men;) but was made good after he went to Heaven by his power in his Ministers, who smote that wicked couple mentioned *Act. v.* without any hands, merely with the breath of their mouth. What shall we think then of their restoring men to life after they were dead; for which they were more notorious? We cannot but look on this as a great witness of the wonderfull power of *Jesus* in them; and consequently of the life and glory he intended to bestow on sinfull dust and ashes. He would not have filled them thus full of his Spirit, if he had not meant thereby to raise their expectations above all that even by its power they at present felt. Had it not been his design to make them hereafter like to God, he would not have preferred them to such a resemblance of his Wisdom and Power here in this World. They that could raise others from the dead, had no reason to doubt of being raised up themselves. When they saw themselves made the conveyers of such great blessings to all mankind; they must needs stand fair, they could not but conclude, for a very large portion of his favour to their own persons.

For

For the truth is, (5.) these gifts which were then given to men proclaimed aloud the marvellous bounty of our Saviour, as well as his power: and would not let them doubt of a far more glorious exercise of it in the other World, then they saw, and were the instruments of, in this. And if any imagine that, though this might be a testimony to *them* of Eternall Life, yet it is none to *us*; the contrary will soon be evident, if you do but consider, (6.) that our Lord having made a promise of *Eternall Life*, not onely to his Apostles, but to all that believe on his Name; the HOLY GHOST puts us in strong hope of it, by demonstrating his faithfulness to his word. For the Effusion of it was the performance of a promise which he had frequently made when he was with them; both before his death, (xiv. *Joh. 16. I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter,*) and after his Resurrection, xxiv. *Luk. 49. Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you, &c. i. Act. 4, 5. Being assembled together with them, he commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, said he, you have heard of me: For you shall be baptized with*

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with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence.

And therefore we have great reason to look for the promise of Eternall Life with much confidence, because He who made it was so faithfull and just in fulfilling his former promise, at the time appointed. Especially since he thereby demonstrated, that he hath sufficient power to doe for us according to his word. For he who made such an extraordinary change in them on the day of *Pentecost*, that they were able in an instant to speak all languages, to prophesy, and understand the secret counsels of God, can change us, we need not question, from glory to glory; and at last transform us so perfectly, as to make us like to himself.

And I may adde, to strengthen this consideration, (7.) that our Lord declared he would send the **HOLY GHOST** for this very purpose, that they might believe the rest of his holy promises; particularly this great one, of *Eternall Life*. Which is the meaning of that which you reade in xiv. *Joh.* 12. where after he had told them (ver. 9, 10, 11.) that God appeared to them and shew'd himself in the Works that He did, which demonstrated that *the Father dwelt in him*, and consequently

quently that he would go and prepare a place for them, and take them up to himself, he adds these remarkable words; *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth in me, the works that I doe shall he doe also; and greater works then these shall he doe, because I go unto my Father.* As if he had said, "Mark now what I farther declare to you, and rely upon it as a certain truth. The works that I have done are sufficient to convince you: but for a greater confirmation of your faith, that *I am going to the Father, and am the Way, the Truth, and the Life*, I tell you, that after I am departed these wonderfull things shall be repeated, before the eyes of the world, by those that believe on me. Nay, some things shall be done which your eyes have not yet seen; *because I go to my Father, i. e. have power in the Heavens, and have reserved something peculiar to be given as a testimony of it, over and above what I have done my self.* And that was their speaking with all tongues on a sudden, and their prophesying; whereby they were inabled to preach to all Nations, as he had done to the *Jews* alone, and work the same wonders among the heathen, which he had wrought onely in
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that Country. A marvellous evidence this was of the power and glory of *Christ* to give *eternall life* ; in that being absent he did those things by his Apostles, which were not performed whilst he was present with them.

And therefore (8.) upon this account the HOLY GHOST thus given to the Apostles, and those that believed by their word, is called *the earnest of the inheritance in their hearts, untill the redemption of the purchased possession.* 2 Cor. i. 22. i. Eph. 14. It was something given them in hand, before his second appearing for full redemption, to assure them they should as certainly receive all that was behind, as they had already received this pawn and pledge of his mighty love.

And indeed we have all much reason to think that he will doe very great things for us when he appears in his own person, (as the Holy Ghost assures us he will, iii. *Act.* 19, 20.) since he hath done so much good to the world by the Apostles, his Deputies, who were men like to our selves. If his Servants brought such blessings to men, then what will the Lord himself bring with him at his coming?

If

If his Ministers restored dead men to life again ; the Master sure will bestow a life as much excelling that which they restored, as he excells his Officers. In short, if the people lookt so earnestly on two poor Fisher-men, when they had cured a man lame from his mother's womb ; iii. *Act.*

12. much more will the Lord of glory draw the eyes of the world to him, by doing astonishing things for his people ; *when he shall come* (as the Apostle speaks 2*Thess.* i. 10.) *to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.*

"He will give such a glory to us, as will
"be much for his own credit, and reflect
"glory on himself. He will not so much
"consult what is fit for us to receive, as
"what is fit for such a Prince as he to
"give. He will cloath us with such ho-
"nour and glory, that it will be an ho-
"nour to him to have his followers ap-
"pear in such rich and shining liveries.
"It will set men into admiration to be-
"hold the bounty of his royall favour to
"them ; and much advance the greatness
"of this Prince, to see such subjects at-
"tend him, the meanest of which are
"Kings. Nor do we strain our fancies,
and exalt our hopes above what we can
reasonably expect, when we look for such

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high dignities: for that we shall be admitted into his heavenly Court, and be thus sumptuously apparell'd, and magnificently entertained by Angels to wait upon us, and carry us to him, we are assured by the testimony of the HOLY GHOST: which cloathed poor men here with a power greater then the most absolute Monarch on earth ever enjoyed; and enabled them to deal greater and richer gifts to men, yea, to scatter them abroad every day as they pass along the streets, or did but spread their shadow over them, then Kings and Emperours could doe at their Coronation, or Conquerours at their most magnificent Triumphs.

III.

And as a farther proof of this, we must observe once more, that the HOLY GHOST gave its testimony of the *Life* that is in *Jesus*, and shall be given to us, when it fell down upon the common sort of believers, as it had done upon the Apostles: who were not desirous to keep the miraculous gifts of it to themselves alone, but readily communicated them to others. It was a great wonder

to hear the Apostles speak with tongues and prophesy, to see them cure the lame, and restore the blind to their sight, nay, raise the dead to life, onely by bidding them live and be well in the Name of *Jesus*: (things which no Potentates on Earth, as I said before, could bestow, though they were forward to take to themselves the name of Gods, and affected Divine honours:) But it was a greater wonder, to see other illiterate Christians receive the same gifts by the laying on of their hands, and invocation of the Name of the Lord *Jesus*; who presently filled them with the HOLY GHOST.

This was a thing so strange, that they could not but look upon it as a token of the most extraordinary Love of God to mankind; from whence they might expect as much happiness as the word ETERNAL LIFE, I told you, imports. For, (1.) nothing ever discovered the capacity of humane Souls so much as this effusion of the HOLY GHOST: which shew'd how large and wide they are, and how much they can contain, and to what degree of excellence they may be improved and raised, and that on a sudden, by the power of God. This

gave them a strong taste of what was to come; and both made them relish immortall life above all other things, and also put them in hope to attain it, by the favour of that person who had promoted them to such a sight of it, in this vast measure of wisdom and love wherewith they were indued. For, (2.) it could argue nothing less, they might very well think, then that they who wore such eminent marks of his favour, as to have a Crown of life and glory set upon their heads in *this* world, should be raised to far greater honours in the *next*, when they should be more capable of his kindness, and nearer to himself. And indeed, (3.) since hereby he dwelt in them, and they became the *Temples of the Holy Ghost*, they might be confident he would not suffer so holy a place to be pulled down, but in order to the building of it better. And since the Holy Ghost also (4.) wonderfully enlarged their hearts, and made them exceeding desirous as well as instrumentall in conveying such exceeding great benefits to others; they could not but look upon it as an undeniable argument of the most bounteous goodness of God; who is far more inclinable to doe good then Men can be, and more ready to re-ward

ward our services then we can be to doe our work.

And considering moreover (5.) the promise he had made of ETERNALL LIFE, the gift of the Holy Ghost was a marvellous earnest of it, and a kind of beginning of it in their Souls. What ? shall an ignorant Sea-man be made a Prophet, and speak with all tongues ? a poor Tent-maker unlock Mysteries, and indite spirituall Songs and Hymns ? a man that yesterday could mend nothing but his Nets, now cure a man of a bloody-flux, or mend a lame leg ? a rude Souldier command Devils, and storm his strong holds more easily then a town without walls ? Lord, what light is this, might they justly say, which shines in our dungeon ! what power is this wherewith we see frail flesh armed ! what might which thou hast given to grafs and hay ! As well may a butterfly think of mounting up to heaven, or a flower attempt to pluck up a cedar, as we poor wretches conceive a thought of effecting such wonderfull things. This sure signifies that men are very dear to God, or else he would not thus dwell among them. It may well make us believe there is nothing so great, nothing so glo-

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rious promised by *Jesus*, but he will work it for us ; having already transformed us into such noble creatures. As *Manoah's* wife said to him , xiii. *Judg.* 23. *If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering and a meat-offering at our hands, neither would he have shewed us such things as these :* so might they in this case say, and with greater advantage then she, *If the Lord would let us still remain under the power of death, he would not have given such gifts into our hands, (for that is more then to receive the poor oblations we make to him,)* nor would he have revealed such secrets to us. He would not have sent us the spirit of wisdom and knowledge, nor raised us to the degree of prophecy, nor put new tongues into our mouths to declare his wonderfull works, nor made all diseases submit to our word. All which gifts, with divers others, they had reason to look upon as the *earnest of the Spirit*, and the *Seal of the Holy Ghost*, whereby they had an assurance given them (as I hope to shew elsewhere) of the everlasting inheritance which *Jesus* hath promised in the heavens. For they demonstrated, that He who had power thus to alter and advance mean men, and to make them

them *Stuporem mundi* the wonder and amazement of the world, could also give that *Life* which he had promised, by that very power which they felt already working in them.

And they also made it evident (6.) that he would bestow it. For there is no more reason that he should thus bestow the *Holy Ghost* at present, then that he should hereafter give us *Eternall Life*. His faithfull promise is the security for both; our hopes are built upon that sure foundation. If there be any difference between the ground there is for one more then the other, the advantage lies on the side of the hope of *Eternall Life*. Which there is more reason now that he should give us, then there was for giving the *Holy Ghost*; even because he hath already done so much for his Church; and there is more reason we should expect it; because, as I said before, we have seen a remarkable instance of his fidelity, in pouring out such *rivers of living water*, when he sent the Spirit which he promised.

And here it comes to my mind, that another Wonder, which *Abarbinell* says in xi. Isa.

the *Messiah* shall work at his coming, is a Miracle like that of dividing the Red sea when *Israel* came out of *Egypt*. Which he endeavours to prove from xi. *Isa.* 15. *The Lord shall utterly destroy (or dry up) the tongue of the Egyptian Sea, &c.* that is, says he, of *Nile*, the great River of *Egypt*. This our Lord hath done more excellently then they imagine. For it was nothing near so great a wonder, that *Israel* should be baptized into *Moses* in the Sea; as it was, that the people who followed *Jesus* should be baptized into him with the Holy Ghost poured down upon them from heaven. The passing through the Sea, and the Cloud to boot, was not such a certain argument, that *Moses* would bring them out of the great affliction wherein they had been plung'd, and lead them to *Canaan*, their rest and inheritance; as these rivers of living water, the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and the admirable effects thereof, filling the world with the *Glory of the Lord*, were an undeniable proof to those who were under its conduct, that *Jesus* was the person who would lead them to a better rest, in a more heavenly Country, which flows with far sweeter delights then milk and hony. This did, as it were, dip their souls into
this

this belief, and made them sensible that *Jesus is the Authour of Eternall Salvation*; far more then the Sea it self could baptize their forefathers into *Moses*, i. e. persuade them that he was the Prophet of God who would deliver them, and bring them to the peaceable enjoyments they desired.

And therefore, I observe, after the *Jews*, who quarrelled at St. *Peter's* preaching to the Gentiles, were satisfied that the *Holy Ghost* was fallen upon them, even as upon themselves, they had no more to say but this, *then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.* xi. *Act.* 18. This they lookt upon as the beginning of God's favour and loving-kindness to them, which would conclude in nothing less then the ETERNALL LIFE of which we are discoursing. And so this very Apostle St. *John*, after he had put the Disciples in mind of the UNCTION they had received, and exhorted them to continue in that *Doctrine* which it taught, (Chap. ii. of this Epistle, 20, 24.) immediately adds that *this is the promise which he hath promised us, even Eternall Life*, ver. 25. Which was as much as to say, that the *Unction* by the HOLY GHOST had so perfectly instructed

instructed them in the certainty of this great happiness, that it was sufficient to move them to abide in the Doctrine of *Jesus* : none being able to teach them better, or to put them in hope of any thing greater then this E T E R N A L L L I F E which he promised, and by the HOLY GHOST assured.

It is true indeed, which some are forward to object, that we in these days see not such evidences as those Believers had; the *Holy Ghost* not inhabiting thus in every one of our Souls as it did in theirs. Nor is there the like reason it should; we being engaged in no such hard services as theirs, which stood in need to be encouraged with the strongest hopes of a glorious reward. They were *in death's* *often*, (as *St. Paul* speaks,) and therefore were in danger to faint, without a most lively gust of immortall Life. The whole World was their enemy, and with the greatest rage oppos'd their preaching; which required a clearer sight of the World to come, and a more sensible descent of invisible powers for their assistance and support. From whence we also derive no small benefit: because the more sensible demonstration they had of it,

it,

it, the firmer grounds of hope are laid for us; whose faith relies upon their testimony, and the power of the HOLY GHOST in them. This is sufficient to hearten us in our duty, that our Lord hath given to those, whose testimony we have the greatest reason to believe, such visible and palpable evidences of his being alive, and of his intentions to quicken his servants to Life everlasting with himself. Let us but heartily apply ourselves, upon these grounds, *to live by the faith of the Son of God*; and we shall find the same Spirit that wrought in them operating in us also, to confirm our Faith and Hope, and make us *rejoyce in hope of the glory of God*.

And so much may suffice to have been said of the *Witness* of the HOLY GHOST, which perfectly agrees with the other two of the FATHER and of the SON: *who are all one*, you see still, *in their Testimony, as well as in their Nature*. So I express'd my self in the Conclusion of my former Discourse about these *Three Witnesses* *; supposing these * Chap. iv. words, though few, would have suffi- pag. 235. ciently testified my right belief in the Holy Trinity;

Trinity; and that none would have imagined, I waved the farther explication of that passage, **THESE THREE ARE ONE**, because I entertained a sense of it differing from that of the Catholick Church. I was not conscious to my self of any such Heresy; and therefore had no reason to be solicitous to prevent this accusation, by diverting from the subject I had in hand, unto another Argument. But some, I have heard, have been so unkind, (to say no more) let them examine their hearts from what grounds, as to whisper such suspicions. And therefore I judge it necessary to take occasion here to declare, that I believe *these three to be one*, in the same sense that all Catholick Writers have done, who have treated of the ever-blessed Trinity. And St. *Augustine* assures me*, that every one who meddled with this argument before him, intended to teach this according to the Scriptures, That *the Father, Son and Holy Ghost enjoy the divine Unity of one and the same Substance, in an inseparable Equality. Hæc mea fides est, quia hæc est Catholica fides*; (as he concludes that Chapter) *This is my Faith, because it is the Catholick Faith.* “We have but one God, because there is but one God-
“ head;

* L. I. de
Trin. c. 4.

"head; and they that are of him have re-
 "lation to One, though we believe them
 "to be Three. For this is not more God
 "and that less, nor is this before and that
 "behind, nor are they separated in will
 "or divided in power, nor are any of those
 "things to be found there which belong
 "to divided Beings; but, to speak all in
 "a few words, *there is One undivided*
 "*Godhead in severall Persons, as in three*
 "*Suns cohering together there is one com-*
 "*mixture of Light.* They are the words
 of St. Greg. Nazianzen, (whom these Whi-
 sperers sure, if they have read him, take
 for a Catholick Writer,) in his Discourse
 concerning the HOLY GHOST. To
 which I will adde what St. Aug. again
 writes in his Book of Faith to *Petrus Di-*
aconus, Chap. i. *If there should be one*
Person of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
as there is one Substance, there would be no-
thing that could be truly called a Trinity.
And again, if as the Father, Son and Ho-
ly Ghost are distinct from each other in the
propriety of Person, they were also severed
by diversity of Nature, there would indeed
be a true Trinity, but this Trinity would
not be One God. But because it is the Tri-
nity in one true God, it is true not onely
that there is one God, but also that there

Orat.
 xxxvii.
 p. 601.

is

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is a Trinity; therefore that true God is in Persons Three, but in one Nature One.

Cateches.
xi.

Thus our Blessed Saviour, St. Cyrill of Hierusalem observes, doth not say, *I am the Father*, but, *I am in the Father*. And again, he doth not say, *I and the Father* *ἐν εἰς* *am one*, but, *ἐν ἑσμεν* *are one*: That we may neither exclude the Son from the Godhead, nor confound him with the Father. One, as to the dignity of the Divinity; because God begat God. One, as to their Kingdom: for the Father doth not rule over some, and the Son over others; (as Absalom who opposed his Father;) but over whom the Father reigns, over those reigns the Son. One, because there is no difference, nor any distance between them: for the Father doth not will one thing, and the Son another. One, because the Son doth not make one thing, and the Father another; but there is one Workmanship of all, the Father making all things by the Son. I suppose this excellent Man will pass for orthodox among our Censurers, though he mention many other regards wherein the Father and the Son (I may adde the Holy Ghost) are one, besides that of their Divinity. And therefore I may justly wonder why any should find fault with me

me (if they be so well skill'd in Christian Writers, as, no doubt, they would be thought,) for saying, *these three are one in their Testimony, as well as in their Nature.* I took it for a Catholick Exposition; else I would have rejected it. And if this was its onely fault, that it was too short; I hope they will rest satisfied now that I have made it longer. Unless they be in the number of those, whom a late Pamphlet speaks of, who judge their Brethren as if they had a faculty to see into their hearts; and resolve not to be satisfied with any words they can speak, though in all appearance they have no other design in the world, but onely, according to the best of their understanding, sincerely to serve God and his Church.

As for those who would have a farther search made into this Mystery, I leave it to themselves, if they please thus to employ their time, after they have considered what the most Catholick Writers have thought of such inquiries. *We ought to acknowledge, saith St. Gregory Nazianzen*,*
One God the Father of himself and unbegotten, and One Son begotten of the Father,
and One Spirit having its Substance of God:

* Orat.
 xxvi.
 p. 445.

of

of the same nature, the same dignity, the same glory, and the same honour; in all things the same, but onely that he is not unbegotten as the Father, nor begotten as the Son. These things are to be known, these things are to be confessed, within these things we must fix; leaving that long babbling, and profane novelty of words, to those who have nothing else to doe. And the forenamed St. Cyrill passes the same sentence on those who curiously pried into this Secret in his days. "He that begot, says he, "onely knows him that is begotten: and "he that was begotten of him, knows "him that begat him. Believe then that "God hath a Son; but *how*, do not en- "quire; for if thou dost, thou shalt not "find. Tell me first who he is that be- "gat, and then I will tell thee who the "begotten is. But if thou canst not know "the nature of him that begat, do not "curiously ask after the manner of the
 ☞ "Son's being begotten. It is sufficient to "piety, to know that God hath onely one "Son, one naturally begotten, who did not "begin to be when he was born in Bethle- "hem, but was before all worlds. The "Holy Ghost hath in the Scripture revea- "led no more; he hath not told us any "thing of the generation of the Son, out
 " of

“ of the Father. Τί τοίνυν πολυπραγμο-
 “ αῖς ; Why then dost thou pragmat-
 “ ical-ly inquire after those things which the
 “ Holy Ghost it self hath not mentioned
 “ in the Scripture ? Thou who knowest
 “ not all that is written, why dost thou
 “ busy thy self curiously about those things
 “ which are not written ? Let it suffice
 “ thee to know, that God hath but one
 “ onely-begotten Son. Be not ashamed
 “ to be ignorant of the rest ; for thou
 “ art ignorant of it together with the
 “ Angels.

Which is the same with what a more
 modern Writer hath said,

*Nescire velle, quæ Magister Maximus
 Docere non vult; erudita est inscitia.*

To be willing not to know what our Su-
 preme Master will not teach, is a learned
 Ignorance. With which I shall content
 my self ; and not envy to those, who have
 a list to handle these things more nicely,
 their ignorant Learning. They may ven-
 ture as far as they please, if they think it
 safe ; but ought not to be angry with
 those who had rather expect farther dis-
 coveries in the other world : where we
 shall be more knowing by a purer and
 more perfect illumination of the most high
 Trinity ;

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O. at. xi.
 πῆς ἀνω-
 τέρω Τετ-
 ἀδ. Θ. ἑλ-
 λὰ μ. ψ.
 &c.

Trinity; (as St. Greg. Naz. speaks else-
 where;) and yet more modest, and apt
 to adore the incomprehensible God, the
 Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Whose
 Testimony is so full to satisfy us there
 will be such an happy State, that before
 I pass to the other *Three Witnesses on*
Earth, I cannot but rest a while and
 consider, what a great way we are ad-
 vanced towards a strong and settled be-
 lief of *Eternall Life*, if these things be well
 digested in our minds.

If we would but always lay before our
 eyes these Records, and were as well ac-
 quainted with them as we are with our
 Evidences for our Estates; if they were
 as fresh in our minds as the words of a Re-
 cord which we are to plead in some Court,
 where we have a Cause to be heard, or
 the Title to our whole Estate tried and
 determined; I do not see how we should
 possibly doubt of this Promise which our
 Lord hath made to his followers, nor how
 we should lose the joy and comfort of it
 in this world of sorrows. Let all those
 who have taken the pains to read thus far
 in this Treatise be so kind to themselves,
 as on all occasions to recollect what they
 have read, and in their quiet thoughts to
 put

put themselves often in mind, that the
Father hath said this is true, by a voice
 from heaven at severall times: when *Jesus*
 was baptized, when he was upon the ho-
 ly Mount, and before a multitude of peo-
 ple, He testified that E T E R N A L L
 L I F E is in him. The *Word* also hath
 shewn us this glorious State, when he ap-
 peared to *St. Stephen*, to *St. Paul*, to his
 beloved *St. John*; who have all commu-
 nicated their knowledge to us, and told
 us that he assured them He lives, and that
 we shall live by him. The *Holy Ghost*
 likewise hath declared this, by coming
 down upon Him, and upon his Apostles,
 and upon his faithfull ones. And then
 they cannot chuse but rely most firmly
 upon such ample and unquestionable
 Testimonies; and be very much affected
 with this full assurance of Faith which
 God works in us. There would be no
 reason, I am sure, why they should not
 as strongly believe and expect the glory
 that *Jesus* will give us, though they do
 not now see it; as we all do the perfor-
 mance of the promise of any person of
 known honesty and ability, though at a
 great distance from us. No doubt the
 faith of Christians would be immovable,
 did they ponder these things; they

would never call it into dispute, after such demonstrations, whether there be another Life or no. Yea, they themselves would become *immovable, and stedfast, and abundant in the work of our Lord*; because the very same Witnesses tell them that this is the onely way to eternal Happiness, which cannot be compassed by any means but by patient continuance in well-doing.

How well then would it be with them, could we but prevail with all Christian Souls to spend some time every day, in calling to mind what they have heard these *Heavenly Witnesses* say? If they would but cast up their eyes every morning towards heaven, and think, There *Jesus* is; there he lives in great honour and glory; there he sits at the right hand of the Throne of God; there *St. Stephen* saw him; in such glory *St. Paul* and *St. John* beheld him; from thence they heard him speak, and make most gracious promises to them; he sent the *Holy Ghost* from thence to be his Witness; there he is preparing a place for all them that have the heart to follow him; thither he will receive our Spirits to behold his glory; and with
him

him shall all good men live for ever in unconceivable joy : How would these thoughts inspire and ravish their hearts? How would they change and transform them into quite other things? How mean and contemptible would our petty enjoyments, which now so tempt us, seem in comparison with that divine condition? How impossible would it be to perswade us to yield to the breach of any of his commands, and thereby forfeit such happiness? Yea, how easy, sweet and pleasant would it be to doe as he bids us, in hope of such an incomparable recompence? I leave every one to make triall of it, that he may be able to tell, if he can, what power and force there is in this settled belief.

It is reported by him that writes the Life of *Laurentius Justinianus*, that when he was a youth, about nineteen years old, which is an age you know most slippery and subject to danger, he thought he saw one day or night (I know not well whether) a very beautifull virgin approaching towards him, and thus addressing her speech to him : “ Why dost thou, O young man, thus disquiet
V 3 “ thine

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" thine heart, and wast thy strength, in
 " a vain pursuit of many things, where-
 " on thou pourest forth thy affections,
 " why dost thou seek for rest in such tri-
 " viall injoyments? That which thou
 " art so desirous of, is in my power to be-
 " stow upon thee. And if thou wilt re-
 " solve to take me for thy Spouse, I pro-
 " mise to bring with me such a portion
 " of peace and contentment, as no other
 " person can enrich thee withall. The
 young man, you may well suppose, was
 much taken with so rare a feature, and
 such fair promises; which moved him to
 crave that he might know her name, and
 the family from which she was descen-
 ded. To which she answered, "I am
 " *the Wisdom of God*; that is my Name,
 " thence is my Parentage: if thou wilt
 " accept of the offer, I will be thine,
 " and give all I have to thee. The
 youth, says the story, instantly con-
 sented; and after he had drawn a
 contract between them, thought she
 took her leave of him, and went away
 to provide for the wedding. Upon
 this he awaked, and imagined the Vi-
 sion instructed him to betake himself
 to a Monasticall life. Which he pre-
 sently vowed; concluding that in that
 retire-

retirement he was to compleat his marriage to the *Wisdom of God*, when he had quitted the empty pleasures of the World.

However fabulous this Story may prove, (which seems to have been composed in imitation of that Vision of *Hercules* which many *Greek* Writers mention,) you may make it true if you please. For, behold how the true Wisdom of God, our Blessed Lord and Saviour, presents himself to you. He hath appeared in most admirable beauty and a glorious form to many of his Servants, which they have described and left us the picture of. In his Gospell he is so lively expressed, that we cannot, if we look upon him, but behold him as *the onely-begotten of the Father, the brightness of his glory, and the character of his person*. Would it would but please you to listen to the offers he makes you, the portion of Life and Glory hereafter, together with true peace and contentment here, which he will assure to you. O that you would but draw a lively image of these things in your mind; and represent the King of glory as soliciting your heart to his service!

vice ! Do you not believe that it would be infinitely more obliging, then such an apparition as that now named ? Would it not more easily make you abandon the sinfull pleasures of this world, then the other made him forsake the lawfull ? Would not the beauty of our Saviour, and the splendour of his glory in the heavens set before your eyes, be more inamouring then any imaginary or reall beauty whatsoever ? Would not these words of his be more piercing then any other, *I will give to him that overcomes, to inherit all things ; and, I will be his God, and he shall be my Son ?* Would it not transport our hearts with joy, to hear that he will be contracted to us ; and assure us of such a dowry with himself in the heavens ? Would it not make all his commands so far from being grievous, that we should think them sweet and delicious above all the pleasures wherein sensuall men are drowned ? He can make no doubt of it, that hath not lost his reason ; and is able to understand what the difference is between such a certain truth as this, and a dream ; and between the commands of our Lord, and the

the obedience which that youth undertook to perform.

Jesus is certainly in the heavens, He sits at the right hand of the Majesty on high, He unfeignedly wishes we would be espoused to him, He will settle an eternall inheritance upon us: and He doth not require us to go into Monasteries and deserts, to live like Hermites and Anchorets, to immure our selves from all society; (though if he did, we should have no ill bargain of it;) but onely to retire seriously into our selves, and there often meet with him, to live soberly, righteously and godly while we are in the world, to let no company draw us from his precepts, nor suffer any creature to rob him of our affection. And what a reasonable demand this is, you will then see, when you heartily believe this E T E R N A L L L I F E which he hath promised. *Believe*, and then you will think there is nothing too much or too hard to be done or suffered, for the attaining such a glorious Life with our Saviour. Which moved *St. Stephen* to suffer stoning, and *St. Paul* to be in deaths often,
and

and St. John to endure banishment in a most desolate Island, and worse things afterward, that they might be so happy.

And let us with honest hearts, desirous to be what God would have us, beg the assistance of the HOLY GHOST to guide us in this way of understanding ; which we shall find incomparably the best, to settle in our mind a sense of the happiness to come.

Macar.
Hom. xvi.
xviii.

For when the Soul comes to the perfection of the Spirit, wholly purged from all affections, and united to the Spirit, the Comforter, by an unspeakable communion, so that by this heavenly mixture it becomes worthy to be a spirit ; it is all Light, all Eye, all Spirit, all Joy, all Rest, all Exultation, all Love, all Goodness and Sweetness. It becomes hereby privy to the Counsels of the Heavenly King, and knows his Secrets. It hath a confidence in the Almighty, and enters into his Palace, where the Angels and the spirits of the Saints are ; though it be as yet in this world. For though it hath not attained the intire inheritance prepared for it there ; yet it is secure from the Earnest it hath received, as if it were

were crowned and possessed of the Kingdom.

Who would not labour then to be so happy, not onely hereafter, but also here? there in possession, and here in hope? What a work is it to ascend up into heaven? What laborious steps can lead us to so great an height? What are the sweats of this mortall life to those eternall recompences? By what pains shall we be worthy of friendship with our Maker? How shall we make our selves a proper habitation for him to dwell in? For he hath said, I and my Father will come and dwell in him that loves me and keeps my Commands. This is the end of the Good we have in hope: this is the heavenly Kingdom: this is the enjoyment of eternall pleasure: this is the never-ceasing joy; the perpetuall triumph; the retribution transcending all our labours, nay, all understanding. There are no labours, no not in thought, equall to this recompence of reward. They all fall so infinitely below it, that for mean, for inconsiderable pains, our transcendently-good Lord will give an enjoyment far surpassing all our thoughts. All humane endeavours are of no account, though we should

Georg.
Nicomed.
in concept.
S. Anna.

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should wear out a whole life in them, compared with the future Blessedness. Though we should sustain a perpetuall combate all our days, though they should be prolonged to an hundred years, or to twice as much, or thrice, or a thousand times, and all this while we should contend in a vertuous course; we shall seem to have done nothing, when we come to confer it with what we shall receive.

And therefore let us gladly, by such small and poor labours, strive to purchase these super-sublime recompences, and treasure up these never-consuming riches. I call those poor and small, which not onely seem so to all; but the perpetuall combate of an whole Age, the most unwearied pursuit of vertue, the most incessant and fervent pains in its service. For such are the Goods which our munificent Lord will give in exchange for them, such are the superabundant riches of his retributions, such is the Hyperbole of his loving-kindness and goodness, that for few things, he will give infinite; for beggery, the greatest riches; for perishing things, Goods that last for ever.

These

These let us seek, and, dedicating our selves wholly to the Lord, make haste to the obtaining so inestimable a Good. Let us consecrate Soul and body to him, and be fastened to his Cross; that we may be worthy of his Eternall Kingdom, giving glory to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

CHAP.

That it is not only
given us by the Holy Spirit
the obtaining of inheritance a Good
as comfort of soul and body to him
be subject to his Grace that we may be
worthy of his favour and blessing
that to the Holy Spirit we are bound
that we may be his children

CHAP.

Y

CHAP. IX.

*Concerning the Witnesses on
Earth; and first, of the
WATER.*

YOU have seen already how many there are that solicit our affections, and perswade us to believe in the Lord *Jesus*, and heartily consent to him in whatsoever he requires. So many, that how we should deny him, after He himself hath appeared so often with the promises of *Eternall Life*, and the *Father* also and the *Holy Ghost* have commended him to us as the Prince of Peace and the Lord of Glory, it is harder to give any reason, then it is to prove that he is the Son of God, and that in him is **ETERNALL LIFE**. For, as if these Witnesses were not sufficient, or that we may be born down by numerous Testimonies, there are *Three* more, who are our Neighbours, (as I may say) with whom we are well acquainted, and whose witness none could ever deny, that speak the very same thing,

thing, and affirm it as strongly as the other, that *God hath given us Eternall Life,* and that *it is in his Son Jesus.*

Let us call them in too, and hear what they say, in the same order wherein we examined them before, in the former business : first taking the Testimony of the WATER, then of the BLOOD, and then of the SPIRIT.

Of the WATER.

BY *Water*, I have shewn, we are to understand, either that *Purity* whereof it is the Instrument, which was most eminent both in *Christ's Doctrine and Life*: or else *Baptism*, both *John's* and *his own*, by which he appeared to be the Son of God. Let us have so much patience as to hear all these once more, and consider what they say to the point in hand.

I.

And as for the *Purity* and Holiness of his *Doctrine*, there is much in it to persuade us, that he hath Life in himself, and will bestow it upon his Followers. Certain it is that, (I.) it naturally lifts up

up the Mind towards heaven, and disposes those that entertain it to look for *Eternall Life*; for which it is but a preparation. For it teaches us to abstract our hearts from this Flesh wherewith we are cloathed, and from this World wherein we live, as not worthy of all those thoughts and that care which we are apt to bestow upon them. The very intent and purpose of it, we cannot but see, is to wean our minds from earthly injoyments, and to take off our affections from the pleasures of sense; to make riches and the praise of men seem little things, and to give us contentment with our portion of present goods, though never so small; in short, to render us something like to God himself, whilst we are at this distance from him. What can any man make of this, but that it is a preparation for another life; an Institution which designs to form men, and make them fit for an higher World? Do but take a review of that Compendium which I have drawn of this Doctrine, in my former Book, and you will be satisfied, that it is nothing else but a contrivance to make us heavenly; and intends to guide us to such a Life as is a prevention of Heaven, a beginning of the celestial state, whereby we shall live,

in part, as men of another World, and not of this.

Which future World, (2.) it is manifest, his heavenly Doctrine supposes; or else it would be so far from that Wisdom which was eminent in him, that it would be the greatest absurdity that can be imagined. For it teaches us, if his service require it, to deny our selves even in the most innocent and lawfull enjoyments of this life; to forsake father and mother and houses and lands for his Name's sake; yea, to lay down our very lives, rather than forsake his Doctrine, and violate his commands. These are expresse Lessons which his Sermons teach his Disciples: but are things so sublime, so much above the reach of flesh and bloud, that it would be the vaineſt thing in the world to propose them to mens observance, without the hope of something in another life to reward such hard services. He would have had no followers on these terms; had he not made it as plain and evident as the rest of his Doctrine, that He would be the *Authour of Eternall Salvation* to them that would obey him. Men were not so fond of troubles and torments and death, as to expose themselves to the danger of them,

them, if they had not seen the greatest reason to believe, that their Master would recompense their present Sufferings with a future happiness so incomparably greater, that it would be the highest folly to avoid them. None can suppose the Authour of such a Religion to be so weak as not to understand, that men would never embrace this profession; unless at the same time that he called them to this high pitch of piety, he *called them also*, as the Apostle speaks, *to his kingdom and glory*. And therefore, without all doubt, our Lord took care to preach this as the principall thing, and to give good assurance of a blessed state to come; because without this it had been the most ungrounded and foolish undertaking that ever man went about, to perswade the world to be so mortified, to quit all present possessions, and to part with their lives for his sake. He must have been the most unreasonable of all other men in preaching such Doctrine, and supposed the World void of all reason, if he expected to have it believed; had he not been certain himself, and been able by evident proofs to perswade others, that all those who hearkened to him should be no losers, but exceeding great gainers, by quitting all

X 2

things

things upon his account. If he had not held this truth in his hands, as clear as the Sun, that they who would follow him should be immortally happy; he might have stretcht them out long enough before he had drawn so much as one follower after him. The Trees would as soon have followed him as Men: who would never have stirr'd a foot in such a narrow path, unless he had shewn them plainly that it led to Everlasting Life.

Let us consider and illustrate this a little. Would not he expose himself to laughter and scorn, that should earnestly perswade his neighbours to go and labour hard in his fields all day, by which they should get just nothing for their pains at night? Would it not seem a piece of strange mockery and contempt of *us*, and as strange a folly in *him* that should invite us to enter into his service, which he confessed would make us sweat, and ingage us in many toilsome employments; and when we inquired what wages he gave, should be able to assure us never a farthing that lay in his power or will to bestow upon us? Would they not be equally ridiculous, he that should make, and they that should embrace such a proposal?

posall? Might not such a trifler expect rather to be kickt, then to be followed by the multitude? Should we not hear them expressing their indignation in such speeches as these? What? Do you take us for arrant fools? Do you think we are mere Mushromes? that our brains are made of a sponge, or our heads stuff with wet straw? What do you make of us? or what have we done, that argues us to be such blocks and trunks as you suppose us? And yet such was the constant preaching of our ever-Blessed Saviour, that if he had not made his promises as plain and certain as his commands, he would have been liable to such language. For he calls men, as you reade in that Parable xx. *Matth.* to a laborious life of piety. From the beginning of his preaching to the end of it, he had no other design. *Early in the morning*, (vers. 1.) when he first appeared in the world, *he went out*: and what was it to doe, but to *hire labourers into his vineyard*? At the *third hour* he went out again, and said to those whom he found idle, *Go ye also into the vineyard*: (vers. 4.) At the *sixth* and the *ninth* hour of his life he still followed the same business. At the *eleventh* also (vers. 6.) he finds other loiterers, and says to them also,

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Why stand you here all the day idle? Would they have moved from their place, think you, if he had not agreed with them to pay them for their pains? Would they have returned no other answer but that, *No man hath hired us*; and not have also added, What will you give us? what shall we gain by our labour? had he not satisfied them about that matter? If there had been no wages to be expected, they had better have stood idle still, or have staid for some other Master. Had it not been evident, that the Lord of the vineyard was a wealthy person, able to give every man his penny, i. e. a reward for his service; he might have called long enough, and seen his ground all overrun with briars and thorns, before he had procured any labourers to go into it. Certainly, if we will but allow our Saviour to have been a person of ordinary reason and common capacity, we cannot imagine he would have endured so long toil and travell, and walkt all the countrey of *Judea* over, to win proselytes to him; if he had not made it as visible, that he would bring men to the blessed sight of God in eternall rest and peace, as it was, that he called them to a God-like life of piety, righte-

righteousness and true holiness during their stay in this present world. We must depress him into the rank of the most witless men; or else believe that He who required so much work from his servants, demonstrated he was a good Master, rich, and furnished with the most ample rewards.

And therefore (3.) we may well believe that He *came* with such Testimonies from above, from the *Father* and from the *Holy Ghost*, and intended *Himself* to appear from heaven as the Authour of Eternall Life; without which he could not have gone about to establish such a Doctrine; or if he had, would not have succeeded. One of these *Witnesses* exceedingly justify the other; and are not to be divided. We have reason to think, a person of his Understanding, *who spake as never man spake*, (his very enemies being judges,) would not have attempted the settlement of such a strict rule of life as his Doctrine contains, without such countenance from Heaven as I have mentioned, to persuade the world that he would lead them thither. Though I must add, (4.) that the strict purity and holiness of his Doctrine singly considered is of great

weight and moment to perswade us that **ETERNALL LIFE** is in him: because this is a part, nay, a principall part, of his Doctrin. Which He, who in all other things, that he said was unreprouable, would not have affirmed so expressly and constantly, if he had not been fully assured it was true.

Do but observe how this Doctrin is constantly intermixed with all his Sermons. It is the very strain of his Preaching, that if any man would follow him, and doe as he did, he should find rest for his Soul; and that *God the Father* of all *would honour those who did him service.* xii. *Joh.* 26. This he proclaims in the plainest terms, and the clearest manner. viii. *Joh.* 12. *I am the Light of the World: (Illuminator & Deductor humani generis,* as *Tertullian* excellently expresses it*, the Inlightner and the Conductor or guide of mankind:) *He that follows me shall have the light of life; the wisdom, that is, which shall lead him to immortall bliss. And to make this more manifest, let it be noted, (1.) how he proclaims this to every man, iii. Joh.* 15, 16. *that the Son of man must die, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternall life,*

* *Apolog.*
c. p. xxi.

life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his onely-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. And (2.) he asserts it with the greatest earnestness, with the strongest and most vehement asseverations. vi. *Joh.* 47. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life.* He tells them also (3.) with the same assurance, that God had sealed him for this purpose; or set a plain mark upon him, whereby all might see that he was to be the Authour of everlasting life. vi. *Joh.* 27. And observe (4.) that, having told them it was visible, if they pleased to open their eyes, that God the Father had designed him to give them immortall satisfaction, he repeats this Doctrine a great many times in that Chapter; vers. 33, 35, 39, 40, 47, 48, 51, 54, 57. Insomuch that *St. Peter* concludes at the latter end of that Sermon, there was no Master comparable to him, who had *the words of eternal life*: ver. 68. And it is farther observable, that he affirms (5.) he came to bring his followers to the greatest happiness. x. *Joh.* 10. *I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.* And (6.) that he tells them again, he came to publish this glad tidings
by

by the appointment of the Father. xii. *Joh.* 50. I know that his commandment is life everlasting : whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak. And (7.) that he affirms, he hath power to make good what he promises. x. *Joh.* 28. And I give unto them eternall life; and they shall not perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. xvii. 1, 2. Glorify thy Son, as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternall life to as many as thou hast given him. And, lastly, he tells them that he was such a person as might well be credited in all this; since he came down from heaven, and was at that moment in heaven. iii. *Joh.* 13. Which he repeats again viii. 23. I am from above, I am not of this world : and ver. 38. I speak that which I have seen with my Father : and ver. 42. I proceeded forth and came from God ; neither came I of my self, but he sent me. For which reason he doth not discourse of immortall life as a Philosopher, going about to prove it by reasons and arguments ; but onely asserts it as one that had Divine Authority, (for which he was to be believed,) and could himself make men eternally happy. This was the onely thing that could be disputed and needed proof, that he came from
heaven

heaven to illuminate the world by his instructions. And this he did not desire they should take upon his bare word, but abundantly demonstrated it : and told them, ver. 28. that after his death they should still see it made more evident that *he did nothing of himself, but as the Father had taught him, he spake these things.* For then, as you shall see in due place, God the Father declared all these words to be true by raising him from the dead.

These things he said so often, so openly, so confidently, and with such appeals to God, (who bare him witness, as you have heard, and never in the least contradicted what he said,) that we have great reason to believe he did not forge all this : but delivered the mind and will of God as sincerely when he said he would give men *Eternall Life*, as he did when he charged them to live *soberly, righteously and godly* in this present world. Certain it is, that He himself believed what he preached, and had no doubt, but a perfect assurance of it; as will appear if we pass to the *Second* thing which we are briefly to consider,

II.

His own most holy Life, in the strictest obedience to God the Father. This *Abarbinell*, in his discourse upon xi. *Isa.* which I have so often mentioned, makes one of the marks of the *Messiah*; the perfect temper of his desires and affections, and the direction of them according to the measures of the Divine Law. Which he thinks is the meaning of those words, ver. 3. He shall be of *quick understanding in the fear of the Lord*. This was so remarkable in *Jesus*, who was so truly, so compleatly and constantly pious, that there never was any person so qualified to lay claim to this Dignity as he was. His Life was so free from all blame, such a perfect abstinence from all the pleasures of this world, such a contempt of all that which we think most worthy of our indefatigable labours; that it hath a strong force in it to perswade us, that he indeed sought Eternall Glory, and was fully assured he should be possessed of it for Himself and for all His.

Who but a man so perswaded of his Doctrine would have lived in poverty, when

when he might, no question, by the multitude and devotion of his followers, have made himself incredibly rich? What should incline him to remain all his days without an house so big as a fox or the smallest bird is owner of, but an expectation of that house which is eternall in the heavens? Could any thing move him to give away to the poor all that was given him, but a certain knowledge of great treasures above? We cannot conceive what should make him refuse the dignity of a King, when the people intended to proclaim him; if it were not this undoubted perswasion, that he was the King of Heaven, and should sit down at the right hand of the Throne of God. Would any of those that doubt this, labour as he did, night and day, for nothing? Would any poor man cure multitudes of all diseases, and take not a farthing for his pains? Would any body live, if he could help it, and not know where he should eat the next meal's meat? And who is he that can find in his heart to endure the hatred of the chiefest of the people, and to be in perpetuall danger of snares and treacherous designs for the taking away his life, without any hope to be a gainer by it? Is there any likelihood

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lihood that our Lord would have laboured in such sort, as not to have leisure so much as to eat, and after all that kind pains be content to be called Deceiver and Devill, and to run the hazard of being stoned and killed; and yet have no assured expectation to reap some fruit hereafter from all his toil and trouble? Let him believe it that loves to sting his fingers with nettles, or to roll his naked body in snow: we that have a more tender sense of our own pleasure must have leave to be of another mind. Let any man try to persuade himself to lead such a life; and by his unwillingness he will easily be convinced, that our Lord, who could look for nothing in this world from what he did and suffered, would never have so chearfully, freely, and without any regret, followed such a course, had he not known as surely that he should be made glorious thereby hereafter, as he knew that he must be made miserable by it here.

Ask his *Poverty* then, and that will bear witness that he laid up treasures in the heavens. Ask his *Humility*, and that will tell you that he sought for the
 Glory

Glory of God onely. Inquire of his *Charity* and *Bounty*, his wonderfull bounty to all men, and that will bear Record both that *all fulness* is in him, and that he will not envy any thing he hath to his followers. Let his *Contentedness* speak, and that will assure you he was possessed of something greater then all worldly goods; which he could tell better how to live without, then others to live comfortably withall. Examine his *Labours* and pains, his travells and journeys, trace his steps over sea and land; and they will all confesse that he sought a better Country, which is an heavenly. Ask him what he meant by his *Patience*, his willing endurance of all reproaches, calumnies, hatreds, persecutions; and they will likewise conclude in the same testimony, that he had *a joy set before him*, which made him despise them all. In short, consult his *Fasting* forty days, his enduring so many temptations of the Devill, slighting his offers, rejecting his counsels; and you can have no account of them but this, that he had indeed *the meat that endures to everlasting life*; that he verily believed the voice from heaven, which said he was the *Son of God*; and that he knew he had a greater Glory,
then

then all the Kingdoms of the world which the Devill offered him.

And after all this, I suppose there is no considering man but will think the unquestionable belief of such a person as he was, to be of very great moment to settle ours in this weighty business. It is safest for us, without all dispute, to follow the judgment of one so well able to discern truth from falshood, that he was of *as quick understanding* in all things else, as he was in the fear of the Lord. We have great reason to think that he was in the right; and was no more deluded himself, then he intended to delude others. There was not the least flaw, as I shewed in the former Treatise, that appeared in his Understanding; nor could he be seduced into this belief by any earthly appetite or desire: and therefore we ought to conclude, he was abundantly satisfied, by the most evident demonstrations, that he should live for ever, and be the Authour of Eternall Life to others: which, among other reasons, should very much satisfy us.

III.

Who may farther consider also the *Baptism* of that famous person St. *John* the *Baptist*. That is, his whole Ministry, which is comprehended under the name of his *Baptism*; as *Circumcision* sometimes includes the whole Law of *Moses*. In this we shall find, if we examine it, a plain testimony to the great truth we are treating of, that E T E R N A L L I F E is in *Jesus* for all the faithfull. All that Nation who persecuted our Saviour held *John* for a Prophet, and went to be baptized of him. Insomuch that the wisest of them durst not affirm that his Commission was *from men*, (or that he taught and baptized the people from a private motion of his own,) but rather that he undertook this office by authority *from heaven*. Upon which account they were bound to receive his testimony concerning our Saviour, as unquestionable: which they themselves clearly discerned to be a good consequence; and therefore would not reason this matter out with our Saviour, but let it fall to the ground, when they themselves had begun the dispute.

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Now He testified as plainly that by him we shall have *Eternall Life*, as he did that he is the *Son of God*. For, (1.) as soon as ever he began to preach, he told them *the Kingdome of heaven was at hand*. iii. *Matt. 2*. Which language the *Jews* understood well enough, and therefore never askt what he meant : for so they had learnt, out of the Prophet *Daniel*, to call the Kingdome of *Christ*. Whose throne was to be erected by an heavenly power, and not by any humane means ; and under whose government they expected the greatest blessings that heaven ever meant to bestow upon them. Now that under this name the *Baptist* comprehends the Eternall Felicity which *Christ* should bring, is apparent from the exposition which he makes of it, in the following part of the Chapter. Where he tells those who were dubious, that he was not *the Christ*, but they might shortly expect him ; and that when he came, he would *gather the wheat into his garner*, as well as *burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire*. iii. *Matt. 12*. This he said when the chief of the *Jews* came to his *Baptism* : which was a testimony that *Jesus*, who presently came after him, was to open the *Kingdome of heaven*,
and

and gather all pious men thither, as wheat into a garner. Which though it denote first of all the Church of *Christ*, yet must needs include in it the notion of a Church to be made exceeding glorious ; because the King of it hath his seat and throne no-where but in Heaven.

And then, (2.) after this the *Baptist* gave a more expresse testimony of what they were to expect from *Jesus*, when he said, *Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the World.* i. *Joh. 29.* Which words must needs intend (as hath been said already) that He is to restore us to the favour of God wherein our first Parents stood, to take away that which separates between God and us, and to make us capable of Paradise again.

And still more expressly (3.) he says, iii. *Joh. 36.* *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life : and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life.* Unto which testimony our Blessed Saviour himself appeals v. *Joh. 33.* after he had been discouraging (ver. 25, 26, &c.) of his power to give life to mankind. Indeed there was a witness, he shews, which *in itself* was far stronger then this ; and that was

the Works which he did : but this was a better witness to them, (and therefore our Saviour uses it,) who durst not affirm *John's Baptism* was not from heaven ; whereas they boldly said the works of our Saviour were not from thence, but from the Devill. This is the meaning of those words that follow ver. 34, 35, 36. after his appeal to *John's* witness ; *But I receive not testimony from man : but these things I say that ye might be saved. He was a burning and shining light : and ye were willing for a season to rejoyce in his light. But I have greater witness then that of John, &c.* That is, " Though I do not chiefly rely
 " on any humane testimony , such as
 " *John's* was, and indeed do not need it,
 " (having one more immediately divine
 " and heavenly :) yet for your sakes,
 " who have a good opinion of him, and
 " own him for a Prophet, and whom I
 " would willingly convince and save by
 " any means, I instance in him so much,
 " and re-mind you of what he said concerning me. That which makes me
 " first of all speak of his testimony, and
 " so often refer you to it, is not, because
 " it is the first and chiefest in its own nature, much less the onely testimony I
 " have ; but because I think it will be most
 " ef.

“ effectually to doe you good : He being
“ in himself a most excellent person, shi-
“ ning among you in great wisdom and
“ zeal ; and also by you so esteemed, and
“ received among you (at least for a sea-
“ son) with a great deal of satisfaction.

And to this now adde (4.) another thing, which I took notice of in the former Treatise, and must here just call to remembrance ; that our Saviour himself was baptized of him at *Bethabara*, a place that denoted him to be the person who should lead men to their Rest, the *Joshua* that should conduct them into the land of promise : and you will confess this WATER we are speaking of to be the Water of life, which, if we drink of it, will revive and chear our fainting spirits. If we do but receive, I mean, the Doctrine of the Lord *Jesus* into our hearts ; if we seriously consider it together with the strain of his Life ; if we mark the office of *St. John Baptist*, the end of his Ministry, and the testimony which his *Baptism* gave to our Saviour ; we shall find them all leading us into this comfortable belief, that He is the *Prince of life*, and that none can miscarry who live as he taught, and tread in his steps ; but have good

hopes in this world, which shall not make them ashamed in the world to come.

IV.

This *Jesus* himself also had his Disciples believe, by the same Authority whereby he baptized and gathered Disciples to himself. Which none could doe, I shew'd you, as he did, but *the Christ*; in whose days the *Jews* expected an Universal Baptism and cleansing of the people. Now the very end and intention of his *Baptism* was, it is very well known, for the *Remission of sins*, and consequently for *Eternall life*. This he taught men to believe, and then authorized his Disciples to receive men to these high and noble Privileges, by baptizing them in his Name. Upon which followed such a marvellous change in their Souls, they were so inlightned, renewed and transformed, that Holy men doubted not to call this Baptism, (a) the *Water of Salvation*, the *Water of Life*, and the *immortal Nativity* (b.) Nay, St. *Augustine* informs us, that the *Punick* Christians called Baptism by no other name then *SALVATION*; which he thought so proper, that he ascribes it to an ancient and Apostolicall

(a) S. Cyprian. epist. ad Donatum, & ad Magnum. (b) Opusculum L. v.

stolicall tradition (c). And *Paschasius* (c) L. i. calls it LIFE, in his Book of *the Body and bloud of our Lord*; where he says of those who died shortly after Baptism, that *post perceptam vitam*, after they were made partakers of *life*, they in nothing declined from the way.

And for this they had the Authority of our Saviour, who said, after he was risen from the dead, xvi. *Mark* 16. *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*: and shewed St. *John*, xxii. *Rev.* 1, 2. a pure river of WATER OF LIFE clear as crystal, running through the midst of the street * of the new Jerusalem, from the throne of God and of the Lamb. Which is a plain description of the place of Baptism, appointed by God and our Saviour, in the midst of Christian assemblies, (called *Streets*, because they are the place of concourse,) for the purifying of the world, and restoring us to Paradise again. And he calls his Baptism WATER OF LIFE, because it runs thither; and there we begin to live *, and are admitted to the friendship of God, and put in assured hope that the Life which then begins shall be continued to *Eternall life*. It is usuall with the ancient Writers of Christianity, to

(c) L. i. de Peccatorum meritis, &c. c. 24.

* So Andreas Casar. joyns the beginning of ver. 2. to ver. 1.

* S. Basil. δεχθή μοι ζῶντος τὸ βάπτισμα. L. de Spiritu S. c. x.

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speak of a μεταποίησις instauration, μετα-
 πλαισις a transformation, μετασχηματισμοσις a
 transfiguration of mens Souls in *Bap-
 tism* : by which, says St. *Basil*, the Soul
 so glisters, that ὁ Θεὸς οἶονεὶ θρόνον αὐτῷ
 ἐαυτῷ ἀπεργάζεται *, God forms it to
 himself to be as it were his Throne. And
 so St. *Cyprian* testifies of himself, in his
 Epistle to *Donatus*, that though he was
 perplexed in so many errours, as made
 him think he could never be rid of them,
 and so led away by those vices which
 stuck close to him, that despairing to doe
 better he began to favour them, as things
 proper to him : yet when he had recei-
 ved Baptism, a light from above came
 streaming into him, a celestially breath re-
 paired him into a new man; and after a won-
 derfull manner he was confirmed in those
 things which seemed dubious, and saw those
 things clearly which before were obscure,
 and found a power to doe that which he
 judged not onely difficult, but impossible.

* in Psal.
 xxix.

Now this change which they felt in
 their thoughts, desires, and passions, as
 soon as they were baptized, was a power-
 full argument to perswade them, that
 they should as really rise from the dead
 and live eternally, as they were now
 quick.

quickned, when they lay dead in trespasses and sins, to the life of God and true piety. Which was the reason that they chose *Easter*, rather than any other time, as the most proper season for the receiving the grace of *Baptism*. So the same *St. Basil* tells us, that every day, every hour, every moment is a time for *Baptism*; but there is none so fit, as the *χρόνος οἰκευόμενος*, the more proper and peculiar season for it, which is *Easter-day*. For the day is *μνημόσυνον ἀναστάσεως* a memoriall of the Resurrection, and *Baptism* is *δύναμις πρὸς τὴν ἀνάστασιν* a power granted us to rise again. So that on the day of the Resurrection, we should receive the grace of the Resurrection. And therefore the Church calls on those whom she hath conceived and travelled withall a good while, that now she may bring them forth. This belief they were desirous, by all means, to impress upon mens minds; and would have them look upon *Baptism* as the seal of a second life *. In which they could not be deceived; finding such a beginning of it already, as testified the mighty power of God working in them.

Exhortat.
ad Bapti-
smum.

* Greg.
Naz.
Carm.
iamb.
Ἀποφύ
βητι δὲ τῆς
βίης σφραγ
τῆς.

And therefore *St. Paul* with great reason alledges *Baptism* as a publick witness
to

to the faith of the Church, about the Resurrection of the dead, and the Life of the world to come. 1. Cor. xv. 29. *Else what shall they doe which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?* The Resurrection of the dead was so much the hope of Christians, and Baptism gave such strength to their hope, that when any person, newly instructed in the Christian faith, died before he could receive Baptism, some of his Friends, it is reported from *Irenæus*, received it after his departure in his Name. To what purpose doe they this? says the Apostle, (if he have respect to this custom,) why do they thus trouble themselves, if they look for nothing after death? This shews, that even those who were mistaken in other things (as in this about baptizing for their deceased Friends) thought the dead were not lost, but that there was hope of their future happiness: else they would not still have continued to assist them, and taken all the care they could that they might not be prejudiced for want of Baptism, which in their stead they received. They would not have been so senseless, as to concern themselves to doe any thing for those who were gone from this world;
if

if they had not believed another, and lookt upon them as capable there of *Eternall Life*. Into the belief and expectation of which all Christians whatsoever were baptized : which perhaps is all that the Apostle means by this Question, *Why are they baptized for the dead?* Which *Rigaltius* * thus interprets, *Why are they baptized ut mortui resurgant, that after death they may rise again?* why are they askt at the Font, whether they believe the resurrection of the dead? So that for the dead, is for themselves, in hope of what shall follow after death, viz. a blessed Resurrection.

* In Ter-
tul. de
Resurrex.
carnis
c. 48.

Which is the interpretation of St. Chrysostome, (as I have observed elsewhere *;) who also bids us take notice, how that which they expressed in words, when they professed to believe this great Article of the Christian Faith, was also represented, as in an Image, by the very act of Baptism. In which *the going into the water, and the coming out, was a sign of their descending to the state of the dead, and of their ascending from thence to life again*. There is no man that is baptized, but by the very rite and manner of it professes to die, at least, to sin, and to rise again

* *Aqua Genitalis.*

* Arias
Moncanus.

again to newness of life. This Death and Resurrection (as the Apostle teaches vi. *Rom.* 3, 4, 5.) is most lively represented there. But this is not all that is intended by it : for even those * who in that sense were already mortified and renewed by receiving the Holy Ghost before their baptism, (as *Cornelius* and his family,) proceeded notwithstanding to receive that holy washing ; and by their *submersion* took upon them the likeness of the dead, and by their *emergence* appeared as men risen again from the dead. If there were no other death to be escaped but that in sin, and no other resurrection to be expected but that to newness of life ; why were they, who had attained these, baptized as dead men ? and being already dead to sin, why again sustained they the image of death, out of which they believed and professed they should come ? This very action of theirs proves that they lookt for another resurrection after death ; which is the resurrection of the body. And this profession of theirs was so much the more weighty, as they were the more learned and instructed, being already taught by the Holy Ghost. By whose power they were already dead to sin, and made alive to God ; and by
whose

whose instruction they professed to believe, that as there is another death, *viz.* that of the body, so they should overcome it by the mighty power of *Christ*, raising their very bodies from the dead.

There are severall other interpretations of this place ; as that of *Epiphanius* *, * *Haresi* 38. who expounds it of those who received Baptism at the *point of death* : but I shall not trouble the Reader with them, because they all conclude the same thing, that Baptism was a publick profession of the hope of immortality ; and a Seal also of the promises of God, not onely to that particular person who at any time received it, but to the whole Church, both to the living and the dead. Who, as oft as Baptism was repeated, had an open assurance given them from God, (by whose authority it was administred,) that they should rise again to everlasting life.

And so I shall dismiss this *First* Witness on *Earth* : which is the more to be regarded, because, though it be not so great in it self as those which speak from heaven, yet to us it is very considerable ; and cannot be denied by those who cavill

vill at some of the other. For all men acknowledge the Life and Doctrine of our Saviour to be incomparably excellent; and *John the Baptist* stands upon record in *Josephus* for a person of severe and strict sanctity; and the whole Christian Church (who were not so childish as to build their hope on a sandy foundation, but stood immovable (as you shall hear) like a house upon a rock, when all the world storm'd and made the most furious assaults upon them,) believed thus from the beginning: as appears by their holy profession which they made when they entred into the gates of the Church by *Baptism*.

The mighty power of which WATER OF LIFE they have thus celebrated with their praises. *Baptism is the Splendour of the Soul, the Change of the life, the Answer of the Conscience towards God. It is the help of our weakness, the putting off the flesh, the attainment of the Spirit, the Communion of the Word, the Reformation of God's workmanship, the drowning of Sin, the participation of light, and the destruction of darkness. It is the Chariot which carries us to God, our fellow-travelling with Christ, the establishment*

Greg. Naz.
Orat. xl.

blissment of our faith, the perfecting of our minds, the key of the Kingdom of heaven, the foundation of a second life *. At this the heavens rejoyce : this the Angels magnify, as of kin to their brightness : this is the Image of their blessedness. We would willingly praise this, if we could say any thing worthy of it.

* Κεντρίε
δουλοῦ Θεοῦ.
Orat. xi.

Let us never cease however to give him thanks who is the Authour of such a gift ; returning him the small tribute of a chearfull voice for such great things as he hath bestowed on us. For thou truly, O Lord, art the pure and perpetuall fountain of Goodness ; who wast justly offended at us, but hast in much love had mercy on us : who hatedst us, but art reconciled to us : who pronouncdst a curse upon us, but hast given us thy blessing : who didst expell us from Paradise, but hast called us back again unto it. Thou hast taken away the fig-leaf covering of our nakedness, and cloathed us with a most precious garment. Thou hast opened the prison-doors, and dismissed those that stood condemned. Thou hast sprinkled us with pure water, and cleansed us from all our filthiness. Adam, if thou callest him, will be no longer ashamed : he will not hide himself, nor run away from thee.

Greg. Nyss.
sen. L. de
Baptismo
Christi.

The

332 Concerning the Testimony Part II.

The flaming sword doth not now incircle Paradise, making it inaccessible to those that approach it; but all things are turned into joy to us who were heirs of sin and death. Paradise, and Heaven it self, is now open to mankind. The Creation, both here and above, consents to be friends after a long enmity. Men and Angels are piously agreed in the same Theology.

For all which Blessings let us unanimously sing that Hymn of joy which the inspired mouth in ancient times loudly prophesied. I will greatly rejoyce in the Lord, my Soul shall be joyfull in my God: For he hath cloathed me with the garments of Salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness; he hath decked me with ornaments as a bridegroom, and as a bride adorned me with jewels. lxi. Isa. 10. This adorning of the Bride is Christ; who is, and who was before, and who will be blessed both now and for ever. Amen.

CHAP. X.

Concerning the Testimony of
the BLOOD, the Second
Witness on Earth.

THE next Witness which comes in order to be examined is the BLOOD: by which, I told you, we are to understand the Crucifixion and Death of the Lord Jesus, with all the attendants of it. This is a Witness which the greatest enemies of Christianity cannot but confess was heard to speak in his behalf. The stubborn Jews, who will be loth to grant that a voice from heaven declared him the Son of God, cannot deny that their forefathers imbrued their hands in his blood. For in the Babylonian Talmud * it is delivered as a tradition among them, that "they hanged Jesus כערב העסא in the evening of the Passover: and that a Crier went before him forty days, saying, He is to be carried forth to be stoned, for conjuring and drawing Israel to Apostasy. If any one can speak any thing for him to prove him innocent, let him appear. It is an hard matter

* Vid. Horæ
Hebr. in
Matt. p.
309. &
Izemach
David ad
an. 3761.

to have any truth from these fabulous people, without the mixture of a tale together with it. When they cannot gainsay what we believe, that their Nation were the great Instruments of his death, they endeavour to find false reasons for so villanous a Murther.

But they granting that his *Bloud* was shed by them, we shall soon prove it was for another cause; even that which is recorded in our Books. Which none ever undertook to confute, though they were put forth in the face both of *Jews* and *Romans*: who might long since have exposed our Religion to shame, if *Pontius Pilate* could have averred out of the Records of the Court where our Saviour was judged, that things were not so as his Disciples have related. And that this *Bloud* of his so shed, and upon such an account as we have received, is of very great force to induce us to believe another World, and an eternall Happiness there for us with *Jesus*, I am now to demonstrate; and shall easily make good, unless we will entertain such low and slight thoughts of him, as no man can suffer to lodge in his mind, who attends to the Doctrine he preached, and all the arguments

arguments which prove him to be the *Son of God*. That alone indeed is sufficient to justify all that he preached; particularly, that God by him will give *Eternall Life* to those that obey him. If he be so nearly related to God, (as even his *Bloudy Death*, I shew'd in the former Treatise, proved him to be,) we may believe him when he says that, *As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself*. But I shall wave this generall way of reasoning, though undeniable; and offer somethings more particular to every one's serious consideration.

I. It is apparent by the whole story, which it would be too long to relate, that to lay down his life was an act perfectly voluntary in our Saviour, who, if he had pleased, might have avoided it. He might have chosen whether he would have died or no: for *no man* (as he said *x. Joh. 18.*) *could take his life away, but he laid it down of himself*; openly professing, *I have power to lay it down; and I have power to take it again*. He need not have fallen into their cruel hands, it is plain, unless he had freely consented to it. And when they were about to apprehend him,

many legions of Angels were ready for his rescue, if he had pleased to lay his commands upon them. xxvi. *Matt.* 53. Nay, when he made the Souldiers feel his power, so that *they went backward, and fell to the ground,* (xviii. *Joh.* 6.) he could with all have escaped and gone his ways, as he had done at other times; when this reason alone is given why they did not apprehend him, as they attempted, *because his hour was not yet come:* vii. *Joh.* 30. viii. 20. that is, He did not see it to be the fittest time for him to resign up himself to their power.

Now it cannot enter into man's deliberate thoughts, that he would have so freely, without any constraint or resistance, given up his life; especially when by preserving it he might have lived in great repute, esteem and admiration of the people, yea, have been honoured for escaping out of the hands of his enemies; if he had not been sure of ETERNALL LIFE and a greater glory in the Heavens, which he should win by going so willingly out of this present world. *He that saved others,* could surely have *saved himself,* and spoiled their jeer; (xxvii. *Matt.* 42.) if his will had not been other-

otherwise resolved. He that raised *Lazarus* from the dead, could have more easily struck all his opposers dead at his feet; if it had been his pleasure. What should make his will then thus bent upon death? What hindred the putting forth of his power for himself, which it is manifest he so often used for the benefit of others? What could move him so tamely, like a Lamb, to give his throat to the bloody knife, and to hang so meekly upon an infamous cross; if it were not the contemplation of an incomparable felicity which he hoped to obtain, by his Obedience to God, and bearing witness to the Truth?

All men of sense cannot chuse but look upon this as an undoubted Argument, that he himself stedfastly believed, and had good assurance of, the truth of what he preached. For who is there that can find in his heart to die, and die in such a manner, so painfully and with such ignominy, for that which he thinks in his conscience is false, nay, does not know to be certain? It is next to an impossibility, that any man in his wits should so far forget himself, as to be forward to throw away all he hath, against the

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strongest inclinations and, perswasions of nature, which abhors death, and most of all a cruell and disgracefull death, merely to justifie a lie; which humane Nature is ashamed of, without the help of torments to make it odious. There have been fundry examples of rashness and foolish boldness; but none can be produced, nor easily imagined, of such an one as this. For what can a man propose to himself, who lays his life at the stake, to make good that which he believes hath no truth in it? What can he hope to get by such a mad resolved obstinacy? No man attempts any thing without an end; much less will he expose his life to the least hazzard, without a cause of some moment. What can you see then in this case weighty enough to be cast into the balance against a man's life, which should make him sacrifice it freely, as our Saviour did? Riches, and all the Pleasures they can provide for us, could be of no consideration; because they will doe a man no service when he is dead, and our Saviour had no posterity to whom to leave them. Honour and Fame also seem to be of as little value; for what satisfaction is it to be talkt of in the world, when we have left it, and hear nothing

of

of what is done in it? Yet this is all that can be imagined to have any power in this business. One may possibly, you may fancy, for to get a great Name in the world by being the Authour of a new Opinion or Sect, throw away his life; though he know that he doth but broach a lie. A strange supposition this is, which a man in his right senses, one would think, should not be inclined to make. But since some have pretended it is possible, I shall briefly shew that it could have no hand in our Saviour's Sufferings. As will appear if we consider, either the Circumstances of his Death, or the quality of his Doctrine, or the manner of his Life.

II. The Circumstances of his *Death* were such, that if they be but a little examined, you will presently find there is no place for this conceit. For (1.) it stands upon good record, that He himself knew of his death beforehand, and foretold it, with the manner of it: and yet was so far from endeavouring to avoid it, that he went of his own accord to the very place where he knew they would come to apprehend him. This is a plain declaration that he was no Impostour.

For though you may fanſy a man tickled with ſo much vain-glory, that he will not ſtick to embrace death, when he cannot evade it, rather then unſay what he hath publiſhed, though he know it to be falſe : yet this is all that can with any colour be ſuppoſed. No ſuch perſon can be conceived willing to ſeek death, to offer himſelf to it, to go to the very place where he knows it waits for him, (when he may as well avoid it,) and deſignedly put himſelf into thoſe hands which it is apparent are reſolved to kill him. No; though fame be his deſign, yet the preſervation of his life, without all doubt, is his greater concernment: and if he can, he will enjoy both, his fame together with his life.

But if any body will be ſo extravagant as to fanſy, that He might intend to get fame, even by running himſelf into this danger; let him obſerve farther, (2.) what our Saviour met withall in his paſſage to his death, which would have ſtopt ſuch vain forwardneſs. For there was ſomething ſo dreadful appeared to him in the way to his Paſſion, that when it approached *he fell into an Agony*. A great horreur ſeized on him, which declared

clared how much Nature was against his proceeding. Whose strong and violent inclinations would have prevailed against a fancy and vain humour; if he had not known that he was engaged in a good Cause, and did not deceive the World. Such terrible apprehensions as then presented themselves, would have made him take the opportunity of the night, and consult for his safety; if he had been a Deceiver, and not very well assured that this was the way to everlasting Life.

And then, if you consider again (3.) that he was not hastily hurried to the gibbet, but had a long time to weigh what he was about to suffer; it will seem incredible that he should not repent of his obstinacy, if he had been conscious to himself of any falshood. For though in a sudden heat of mad zeal a man may be supposed so foolish, as to maintain an untruth with the hazzard of his life; yet the sight of long-continued torments set a great while before his eyes, would make him in all likelihood confess the truth.

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But (4.) that which quite overthrows this idle supposition is, that the kind of his death was such as could procure him nothing less then glory and fame : there being nothing more infamous and reproachful then to die like a vile slave upon a Cross. This he could not but foresee would expose him to the scorn of all the World ; did not something else gain him more credit then this could do disgrace. And so it proved afterward ; notwithstanding all the Miracles he had wrought, his Crucifixion was the laughter of the Gentiles , and a stumbling-block to the *Jews*. From whence we may conclude that, if we will but allow him to be a man of common sense, he would not have taken this way of all other to procure fame. No course he could have thought of to propagate his Doctrine would have been more mad then this ; if it were not taken, as in all reason it ought to be, for a token of his sincerity and truth in what he preached : which would be published, he knew, to his immortall honour and glory in all the world.

But dying such a death as he did, there could be no hope , it must be farther
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considered, (5.) that his Doctrine should be so much as published by his followers, much less received by others; unless he were both sure himself that it was the truth, and that he could make the truth of it appear to them. And then what would have become of all the glory, for which it is supposed he might be tempted to part with his life? All that he could doe to secure his Disciples, that he preached nothing but the truth, and to encourage them also to preach *Christ* crucified, (which was a most odious and dangerous undertaking,) was to tell them that He would rise again the third day, and appear alive to them. Now it is as manifest as the Sun, that, if he knew himself to be an Impostour, he could have no hope that God would raise him up again: and it is as manifest on the other side, that, if he did not rise again, there was no hope that his Apostles would preach him, because he had proved himself a liar: and if he was not preached by them, there could be no hope of glory and fame: and, consequently, he would never have died in expectation of that, which, if he did but abuse the World, he knew could not possibly attend upon his Name. For it is visible, it must either

ther have been buried in silence, or else remembred with reproach ; He himself having blasted it, by failing in the performance of his word.

But I have said enough of this, and therefore shall consider onely one thing more, (6.) what it was that comforted our Saviour and supported his spirit upon the Cross. Was it the hopes he had to be cried up by his followers, and magnified every-where, when he was dead and gone, for a man of an invincible spirit? No ; He comforted himself with the thoughts of his own integrity : He humbly addressed himself in prayer to God : He relieved himself with the thoughts that he was his Father ; to whom therefore he commends his spirit, and breathed out his Soul in a pious confidence that He would receive it, and glorify him in the heavens. For a little before he suffered, he lift up his eyes thither, as St. John testifies, and said, *Father, the hour is come ; glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee, &c. I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to doe : And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thy own self, with the glory I had with thee before*

before the World was. xvii. Joh. 1, 4, 5. And when the moment of his departure was come, and he was just expiring on the Cross, He cried out with a loud voice, that all might hear him, Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit. And having thus said, he gave up the ghost.

He that shall impute all this also to vain-glory, we may rather conclude takes a pride in cavilling and contradicting; and hath lost all sense of the Nature of man, which finds no inclinations in it to be thus audacious. For how can he repose any hope in God, who at that very instant when he expresses it is committing the greatest open affront unto him imaginable? Our Blessed Saviour was ever a devout worshipper of him, and in all his ways acknowledged him: and therefore since he did thus seriously betake himself to him in his sorest distress, it is apparent he was perswaded of his own sincerity and truth: which God the searcher of all hearts knew; to whom therefore he appeals, and was confident he should live with him for ever, and be able to give Eternall Life to others.

III. But what need is there to insist any longer upon such considerations as these, when his *Doctrine* (which is the *Second* thing I mentioned) is so holy and pure, so heavenly and divine, that the constant preacher of such things could not be guilty of so great an impiety, as to call the God of heaven at last to bear witness to a known untruth? No; it condemns lesser lies to so severe a punishment, that to say, he was sent of God with the words of *Eternall life*, nay, was *the Way, the Truth, and the Life*, when he knew he was not, deserved, according to his own sentence, the heaviest condemnation.

To which if you add the *manner of his Life*, which was the *last* thing, it will compleat the Demonstration. For it was so perfectly conformable to his *Doctrine*, that we cannot but think he believed it; and so could not die with a lie in his mouth. Particularly, it was so free from all covetous designs, and from hunting after the applause and praise of men; that it is incredible he should seek that by death, which he had despised through the whole course of his life. If he was so
thirsty

thirsty of vain-glory, as to lose his life for it; why did he not make it his business to win all he could of it, while he lived? Why did he not lay the foundation of his after-fame, by insinuating himself, in the most diligent and men-pleasing manner, into the favour of all the *Jewish* nation? and conform himself so perfectly to their humour, that they might have presently made him their King? Nay, why did he not accept the offer, when the people intended to advance him to the throne? This had been a more likely way to honour and renown, if that was all his aim, then the lifting him up upon a Cross. He might have hoped to build a lasting glory on the love of the Scribes and Elders of the people: whereas this infamous death, he could not but see, would make him so odious, that it would rob him of all mens good word, and quite frustrate the design of winning a reputation among men. This is a truth of which I presume, by this time, the most suspicious and unbelieving are convinced: who cannot but confess that the voluntary death of such a person as this, and a death so horrid and ignominious, is a plain testimony of his sincerity; and proves, beyond any reasonable contradiction, that he did
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not invent his Doctrine himself, but believed it to be of God ; and did not seek to gain any thing by it but immortall life and glory in the world to come.

IV. Now that we must needs be great gainers hereby as well as himself, will appear, if you consider that he came into the world on purpose to doe mankind good, as the business of his whole life testifies. He *went about doing good*, and sought all occasions of obliging even the most ungratefull. He had compassion on every body he met withall, and never denied a cure to those that begg'd it, though they were never so poor and contemptible. He imployed his Disciples also, who attended on him, in the same charitable works, of healing all manner of diseases, and casting out unclean spirits. He bad them go, and speak *peace unto every house* into which they entred. And as for themselves, he professed the greatest love imaginable to them, as they themselves have recorded. He called them his *Friends*, and did not use them as *Servants* ; nay, his *Children*, and at last his *Brethren* : which are all terms of much kindness and tenderness, which he ever expressed towards them. From whence

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I conclude that, unless he could have served them better by his death then by his longer life, he would not have so soon and so willingly gone to the Cross, and there left these dear Friends, for whose sake he had hitherto lived more then his own. If he had not died for their sake too, and been certain he should thereby shew more love to them, and doe them better service then any other way; he would have been as much inclined to stay still with them, as they were to desire it.

He saw how loth they were to part with him; and with what sad countenances and troubled spirits they received the news. He was incompassed with sighs and groans when he did but mention it; for *sorrow* (as he speaks xvi. *Joh. 6.*) *had filled their hearts.* Would not this have moved a heart less tender then his, to alter this resolution, when it was in his power to stay longer with them? How could he endure to see their tears flow so fast, when he was able to dry them up with the speaking but one word, that he would not leave them? If he had not been sure that he was *going*, as he told them, *to his Father*, and that it was on

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purpose to prepare a place for them, which ought to have made them *rejoyce* rather than weep, because he would come again, and receive them to himself, that where he was, there they might be also; (xiv. *Joh. 1, 2, 3, 28.*) without all doubt his great love would have yielded to their prayers, and commanded his power to prolong their happiness in his company. He should be able, he verily believed, to doe greater wonders for them, and bestow greater blessings upon them, if he did not hearken to their importunities; or else we cannot but think (if we measure him by our selves) he would have still continued with these his dear Companions: especially since none, as he professed, could snatch him from their society, but it was his own free choice to leave them.

V. And he earnestly desired *them* to believe as much, and to look upon his **BLOOD** as the Seal of a *New Covenant*, which contained better promises than the former, between God and men. So he said, just before his death, when he spoke of the Representation of it, *This is my BLOOD of the New Testament (or Covenant) which is shed for many for the remission of sins.* xxvi. *Matt. 28.* And so
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the Apostles believed and spake of his **BLOOD** in the same terms; when by his resurrection from the dead they saw that it was *the BLOOD of the Covenant*, x. *Heb.* 29. and that he was most eminent for this above all other things, as the expression is xiii. *Heb.* 20. where the Apostle calls him the *Shepherd of the sheep*; ὁ μέγας ἐν αἵματι διαθήκης αἰώνιας, *who was great in the bloud of the everlasting Covenant*. Now this is one Article every body knows, (one of the promises contained in it,) that we shall as certainly have *Eternall Life*, as *Israel* in due time was brought to the possession of the good Land God promised to their Fathers.

Abraham, you reade xv. *Gen.* 7. had the word of God for it, that he would give his posterity the Land of *Canaan*, into which he had brought him out of *Chaldea*. And when he made so bold as to ask how he should know that this was true, you find (ver. 9, 10, 11.) that God passed this promise into a Covenant, which was made by the bloud of sundry beasts: whose bodies being divided, and the halves laid one against another, a *smoking furnace* appeared and a *lamp of fire*,

fire, (representing a Divine Presence,) which passed between those pieces, (ver. 17.) according to the custom in those days of making Covenants, by the parties going between a beast so cut asunder. In like manner our Blessed Lord and Saviour promised more than once or twice the *Kingdom of Heaven* to all his followers, most earnestly intreating them to believe it. And lest they should doubt of it, he proceeds at last of his own accord to ingage himself to bestow it, by entering into a solemn Covenant with them. Which was ratified, not by the blood of beasts, and the cutting their bodies in pieces; but by his own most *precious blood*, and by suffering nails to be thrust through his own flesh: that he might confirm us in the belief of his *promise of an eternall inheritance.* ix. *Heb.* 15.

VI. And great reason there is we should be confirmed by it in this belief. For what could he doe more to assure us he meant as he spake, then to seal it with his blood? The Apostles justly took this to be τὸ μαρτύριον, an eminent *testimony* or WITNESSE to the truth of that which he preached. So you
 . reade

reade 1 Tim. ii. 6. He gave himself a ran-
 some for all, τὸ μαρτυρεῖν καὶ ἐν ᾧ ἰδίῳ, a
 testimony in due time. That is, "He be-
 came the price of our Redemption, and,
 like the Paschal Lamb, his blood saves
 us from the destroyer, and assures us
 God will bring us to our Eternall Rest :
 of which we cannot reasonably doubt,
 since his giving himself thus to die for
 us is an evident testimony of God's
 great love to men, and of his will
 (which he spake of before ver. 4.) to
 save all men ; by pardoning their of-
 fences, and bringing them to Eter-
 nall life for *Jesus* his sake. His blou-
 dy death was an unquestionable Wit-
 ness, as St. *John* here calls it, of the
 truth of his promise ; which he con-
 firmed and sealed in this solemn man-
 ner, by dying on the Cross to verify
 it. And this he did at that very time,
 or season, which was most fit and pro-
 per for such a business : (just when
 the Prophets said he should doe it :)
 for in those days (as we reade ii. Luk.
 38.) they looked for redemption in Je-
 rusalem.

And he could not satisfie their expecta-
 tion by any better means then this : which

was *illud Testimonium*, as *Erasmus* renders it, *that Testimony*, that remarkable Witness which none can justly question. For it is taken by all for certain, that He doth not intend to deceive, *qui morte sua fidem facit*, who seals what he saith with his blood. This *Maenue* or *Testimony*, I may adde, or WITNESS to the truth of what he preached, was most properly *his own* Testimony. There were sundry others; but none, while he was on earth, so peculiarly *his* as this: which was all he could doe to justify himself and his Doctrine. The *Voice from heaven* was a Witness, as you have heard; but that was the testimony of the Father. His *Doctrine* was a Witness; but he saith of that, *it is not mine, but his that sent me.* vii. *Joh.* 16. His *Works* or Miracles were a Witness, as he says v. *Joh.* 36. but in the same place he adds, that they were *the works which his Father gave him to finish*; and xiv. 10. *My Father doeth the Works.* But as for his most precious BLOOD, it was that, and that alone, whereby He himself witnessed the truth to us. For *this cause he came into the world*, as he tells *Pilate*, xviii. 37. and it was a free act of his own: for which reason he is said to give himself for us, and to lay down

down his life ; there being none, as I said before, that had power, without his consent, to take it away from him. And therefore it may well be called Τὸ μαρτυριον, *That testimony*, whereby He more peculiarly witnessed, that *this was the will of him that sent him, that every one who saw the Son, and believed on him, should have everlasting life.* This he preached all his life, and he justified it to be true by his Death. When they would have had him revoke what he had said, and deny that he was sent upon this message by God, he maintained it to the last drop of his blood. Which was as much as could be done for the verifying of his Doctrine, and assuring the World that he sincerely published the will of Heaven. For who can doe more then die for the truth which he asserts ?

But he having thus attested by dying, that which God the Father had witnessed before in his life-time by voices from heaven, by signs and wonders, and such like things ; it pleased the same Father Almighty to give a more illustrious testimony to Him, and to the truth of his Doctrine, then ever had been given either in his life or at his death : and that was by

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his Resurrection from the dead. Which is commonly in the Holy Scriptures ascribed to him, and made his work; (ii. *Act.* 24, 32. i. *Ephes.* 17, 20. &c.) and evidently proved all that I have said, and more too. For it shewed, that as he was not a deceiver of others, so he was not deceived himself. God hereby bad all the World believe what he had preached; and no longer make any doubt of that which he had testified, even by his own **B L O O D**, to be his heavenly Truth. But of this more in its proper place.

VII. Let us now consider, that those persons whom our Saviour bad all men hear, because they were sent by him, as he was by the Father, have told us, (and the event proved it true,) that this **BLOOD** was shed *to make peace*; as you reade ii. *Eph.* 14, 15. That is, to reconcile *Jews* and Gentiles together, between whom there had been very long differences, so that of twain they might become one new Man; and both serve him in the same Religion, and partake of the same privileges. What force there is in this to prove the right we have to *Eternall Life* you will soon see, when I have noted,

noted, that the intention of God to bring all the World to share alike in his divine favour and love, which had been so much inclosed in the *Jewish Nation*, was notably proclaimed by *the rending of the veil of the Temple in twain*, just when the veil of our Saviour's flesh was torn, and he yielded up the ghost. xxvii. *Matt.* 50, 51.

This was a plain indication, as *Photius**, * Epist. CXXV. the famous Patriarch of *Constantinople*, hath truly observed, a *Symbol and Pre-signification*, to use his words, of the overthrow and desolation that was coming upon that Temple, and the Worship therein celebrated. How could it be otherwise construed, when that place wherein their most holy rites were performed, and their most venerable mysteries kept from the eyes of the vulgar, was now laid open and exposed εἰς κοινὴν θέαν καὶ βεβήλωσιν, as his words are, to common view and profanation?

This was a preface, as he calls it, to the utter subversion and extinction of the rest of their Ordinances, and their legall Worship. The consequence of which was, as he likewise notes, that the knowledge and service of God according to the Law, which had been so long circum-

scribed

scribed and shut up in one city and country, being to be abolished ; that worship which by the Passion of our Saviour was revealed, was to be established, and spread to the uttermost parts of the Earth. And therefore the rending of the veil did as good as proclaim to all the world, and cry with a loud voice, saying, *Come hither and behold the invisible things. Come eis Δείκτω εἰς τὴν θέαν τῶν θείων Μυστηρίων* from whence you have been so long excluded. Here is free leave for you all to enter, who have as much right as any to that which before was inaccessible.

And since this most holy place was a type of Heaven, (God commanding Moses to make all things according to the pattern in the Mount,) the shutting up of this from the people, and hiding the things contained in it, by a veil drawn before their eyes, was an acknowledgment that by the legall worship there was no entrance into the heavens ; but the way was unpassable by those that stuck onely to its rites and ceremonies. And therefore the tearing of this veil by the death of Christ signified as plainly, that the obstacle was removed ; and preached to the world, as with the sound of a trumpet, that

that every one of us, by his BLOOD, may hope to come thither. For He that emptied himself for this very cause, as the same *Photius* writes, and took upon him our flesh, and suffered all things for our sake, *Christ*, I mean, our God, hath opened a new passage into the kingdom of heaven, by his life-giving death. Which both dissolved that old Religion, (as the very same thing you see foresignified,) and introduced such an one as will certainly bring us into the high and holy place, whether *Jesus* our forerunner is entered for us.

And that this tearing of the veil in sunder was the effect of our Saviour's passion and precious BLOOD-shedding, is visible from the relation which the Evangelicall story makes of this Prodigy. So I call it, because you read that it was not rent from the *bottom* to the *top*, as it would have been if the Earthquake (as some may be prone to suspect) had been the cause of it; but *from the top to the bottom*. xxvii. *Matt.* 51. This evidently shews, it was an hand from above that made this breach: which following immediately upon our Saviour's giving up the ghost, was as sensible a token that it depended

depended upon no other cause but that. The most impious are not able to devise any other reason of so strange an accident. Which could have no naturall cause, (as an Earthquake may,) but proceeded from a *θεομηνία* (as *Photius* his phrase is) Divine vengeance, which gave the veil this stroke, and cut it quite in two; as an indeleble proof that it was the BLOOD of an innocent person which they now had shed. And indeed the Earthquake, there mentioned, was so far from being the cause of this rent, that it followed after it: that Power from on high which first slit the veil, next of all shaking the earth, and cleaving the rocks in sunder.

To which I think it may be fit to adde, that the *Jews* themselves tell us, the gates of the Temple used, after this, to open of their own accord forty years before its destruction *. Which made R. *Jochanan ben Zaccai* cry out, O Temple, Temple, why dost thou affright thy self? I know that thou shalt be destroyed in the end; for *Zachariah* prophesied of thee, Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy Cedars: xi. i. Which new prodigy, confessed by many of their Writers, together with

* *Tzemach David* ad an. 3785.

with the extinction of the Lamp that used to burn there, was a witness that God was going away from that place, and intended no longer to dwell in it; but would shew his Glory, which for many years had heretofore filled that house, to all the Earth.

Now then, if the Partition-wall was thus broken down through the BLOOD of *Jesus*, and all laid open and common, that we might enter upon the possession of the Divine promises as well as others; it is certain, by the Witness of this BLOOD, that there is an Heavenly Inheritance for us, for Earthly there is none. Either we must obtain *Eternall Life* by him that died for us, or nothing at all. For there is no land of *Canaan*, nor any thing like it, given to us *Gentiles*, who are now called to inherit the promises. We have no assurance of any worldly purchaces; no portion of money, vine-yards, olive-yards, or other goods of that nature, assigned to us, as there was to the ancient *Israelites*. But quite contrary, they that enjoyed the very *first-fruits* of the Divine Love, were told that every one who would live godly in *Christ Jesus* must suffer persecution; and take up their cross,
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and forsake all, if they would be his followers. Accordingly we have examples of those who sold their lands, and when they had done, gave away the price of them: so far were they from thinking of any temporall rewards. Undoubtedly then, the Blessing which *Jesus* purchased for us by his BLOOD, whereby he laid waste all former inclosures, can be nothing else but great Possessions in another World; where we have the promise of an eternall Inheritance. This we ought to expect with the most assured confidence: for we cannot make any doubt of it, unless we will look upon the BLOOD of *Jesus* as more ineffectuall then the blood of bulls and goats, whereby they held the Earthly *Canaan*.

VIII. And now let us once more look upon the BLOOD of *Jesus*, as the *blood of a Sacrifice*; whereby all Covenants were anciently sealed, and without which there could be no entrance, no not for the High-priest himself, into the Holy place where God dwelt. Those inspired persons, whom, as I said before, our Saviour bids all men hear and reverence, frequently call his Death by this name. And common reason also leads us to have
the

the same thoughts of it. For if it was not the BLOOD of the most precious and acceptable Sacrifice which He offered upon the Cross, how could it put an end, as it hath done, to all the old Sacrifices, which had stood so long by God's appointment; and make all the blood that was afterward offered of no force at all for their preservation from ruine? That it did so, is manifest by the experience of near sixteen hundred years. And the *Hebrew* Writers themselves confess, that the *scarlet tongue*, (as they call it) that is, the list of that colour and figure, which was hung between the Scape-goat's horns, or, as others will have it, at the door of the Temple, and always used to turn white, according to that in *Isaiah* 1. 18. would never alter for forty years before the destruction of the Temple, but still continued red on the great day of Expiation. Which if it be true, (as we have their own faith for it,) was a shrewd token, that their most excellent Sacrifices were now able to doe them no service; and that their Sins were of so deep a dye, having crucified the Prince of life, that nothing in the old Religion could purifie them. In vain did they expect to hear that tongue speaking peace

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to them, which was wont to publish good tidings ; for it still lookt as red as blood, and told them there was no hope for them but in *Jesus*, who alone could make their crimson sins as white as wool.

By his bloody Death they might sue out a pardon of those very crimes which they had committed against himself. For it being a Sacrifice, was for the remission of Sins : or else the World had been in a worse case then it was before, now that all other *Bloud* to cleanse them was quite taken away. And there was no reason to doubt but God was perfectly well pleased and satisfied with this one Sacrifice of his ; else he would not have raised him from the dead, nor admitted him into the heavens, where, as He himself hath since declared, he appears in the presence of God, and by virtue of his Sacrifice makes perpetuall intercession for us. Now this plainly infers (as hath been said before) the hope of Eternall Life. For if there be *remission of sins*, then we are restored to the state of innocence again. We are put into the state and condition of the sons of God ; and there is nothing to hinder our being re-possessed of *Paradise* and the *Tree of Life*. To which we not
being

being restored in this World, it remains that we be admitted to it and re-instated in it in another.

IX. Unto all which let the consideration of the time be added when our Saviour suffered: for that is not without its instruction in this business, but contributes something to the confirmation of our faith. It was at the Feast of unleavened Bread, (as they themselves cannot deny,) a solemn time appointed by God to be observed at their departure out of *Egypt*; when they were ransomed by a mighty hand, and purchased to be God's peculiar people, and began their journey towards the Land of *Canaan*, which he had promised to their forefathers. At this Feast, it is well known, a Lamb, immaculate and pure, was ordered to be slain; whose blood was that which saved them from the strokes of the Angel of Death, who destroyed the *Egyptians*. Now our Lord, the Lamb of God without spot and blemish, the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world, (as *St. John Baptist* testified,) being slain at this very time, and hanging on the Cross after the same fashion wherein the Paschall Lamb was wont to be killed; it

was a Testimony clear enough, to those that observed and laid things together, that his B L O U D was their ransome from a greater slavery, and was shed to deliver them from eternall death and destruction; and, after they had travelled a while through the wilderness, as I may call it, of this world, and overcome there all difficulties and temptations, would procure their entrance into a better and more glorious Rest then that wherem they were.

The Holy man who writes the Epistle to the *Hebrews* proves unanswerably, (chap. iv.) that the Rest into which *Joshua* brought the Children of *Israel*, was not all that good men expected, and which God intended to bestow upon them. For if that great Captain had brought them to their finall Rest, there would not have been mention made by the inspired Psalmist, many years after their settlement in *Canaan*, of another Rest, which, as the words there are, remaineth for the people of God. Now who can pretend to be the Captain of their Salvation, to conduct them thither, but onely our Blessed Saviour? whose Name is the same with that of the ancient *Joshua*

Ishua or *Iesus*; who was baptized at that very place where they entred into their Rest in the promised Land; to whom the heavens there opened, and God the Father spake by an audible voice, and the Holy Ghost fell down in a visible shape; who at last, after many promises and assurances that he would bring them to the heavenly Country, was offered at that very time when their forefathers began their travells to their resting-place; and hereby sealed what he had promised by his bloud, as God the Father sealed to it by divers acts of his, that He was a Lamb without spot, *an offering and a sacrifice to him of a sweet-smelling savour.*

Well might *St. Paul* call him *our Passover* that *is sacrificed for us.* 1 Cor. v. 7. For it is as visible that he was slain for the salvation of mankind, as that the *Paschall Lamb* was slain for the preservation of *Israel*: and that as the destroying Angel passed over those houses where he found the bloud of that Lamb upon the door-posts, and spared the lives of the inhabitants; so all those Souls that are sprinkled with the bloud of *Iesus* (*i. e.* believe on him) shall be delivered by him from perishing, and preserved to

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eternall

eternall Life. Which Salvation he procured by offering himself freely as *our Passeover*; that is, for the like end (but as much excelling as Eternall life doth temporary) for which the *Paschal Lamb* was sacrificed. And he made his sacrifice the more remarkable, by offering it at that very time when the other was offered, and when they themselves expected it. For some of the *Jews* say expressly, which adds much weight to this observation, that *on the same day of the month Nisan Israel shall be redeemed in the days of the Messiah, on which they were redeemed when God wonderfully brought them out of the land of Egypt.*

*Vid P.
Fagium in
xii. Exod.
13.*

Now our Saviour made good his word, which he had often passed, that he would give them his very *flesh to eat*; whereby they might feast with him, as they had done that day on the *Paschal Lamb*. He gave them also his very *bloud to drink*; which was the price of their redemption, that which saved them from the destroyer, and overcame those enemies which opposed their entrance into the Eternall Rest. For *his flesh*, (as he speaks vi. *Joh.* 55.) being offered on the Cross, *was meat indeed, and his bloud drink indeed.* That is,

is, the most perfect food and excellent nutriment ; which hath a power to give (not a temporary, as the *Paschal Lamb* did, but) an Eternall life, to those that partake of it by a lively faith in him. Some of the *Jews* themselves thought there was some greater Mystery in the *Passover* then the commemoration of their deliverance out of *Egypt* ; and say expressely, that then God communicated his Divinity to men. They are the words of R. *Judah* *, *By the Sacrifice of* * *apud*
the Passover God joyns men so closely to *Masium in*
himself, that they are one with him, as *v. Jesh. 10.*
light is with a candle. Which had little truth in it, till *Christ our PASSEOVER* was sacrificed for us ; when the mystery was explained, and he invited all men to come and *eat of his flesh, and drink of his bloud*, and thereby have such a fellowship with him in his death, that he might communicate to them his life. For τὸ
 εἶναι τὸ πίνειν τὸ αἶμα τῷ Ἰησοῦ, τῆς κυριακῆς μεταλαβεῖν ἀρταγόρας, as *Clemens Alex.* speaks *, *This is to drink the bloud of* * *L. 11.*
Jesus, to partake of the Lord's immorta- *Padag.*
lity. *cap. 2.*

And so our Lord explains himself, when he adds, in the next words, (ver. 57.)

"As the living Father (who, being the
"authour of life, can give it again to
"the dead,) hath sent me, and I live by
"the Father : (shall rise again, though
"I give my flesh to be slain :) so he that
"eateth me (believeth on me though
"crucified) shall live by me; that is, be
"raised again to life by me, as I by the
"Father. For he gave his flesh, (as he
"says at the beginning of this discourse
"ver. 51.) that is, delivered it to be
"made a bloody sacrifice , for the life
"of the world , i. e. that all mankind
"might have remission of sins, and eter-
"nall life. Which he will as certainly
"give to those who do not refuse to par-
"ticipate of this Sacrifice by believing
"in him, as the Father of life raised him
"from the dead to live for evermore.
These words seemed hard to some of
his Disciples, ver. 60. who could not un-
derstand that there should be such virtue
in his flesh as to give life unto the world.
But our Lord tells them ; there was
no cause of being offended at this dis-
course ; for if they would but stay a while,
they should be convinced that he did
not ascribe too much to it : ver. 62.
What and if ye shall see the Son of man
ascend up where he was before ? That is,
"What

“ What will you say, if you behold me
“ raised up from the dead, and ascend
“ into heaven, where I was before I took
“ this flesh? Will you not then confess
“ that my *Death* (which is meant by his
“ *giving his flesh* to them) had an excee-
“ ding great virtue in it, being so accep-
“ table to God as to be thus highly re-
“ warded? Will it then seem incredible
“ to you, that I should obtain thereby
“ a power to raise the dead, and to give
“ eternall Life? This, sure, will be a
“ convincing argument that I have not
“ said too much of my B L O U D, nor
“ promised greater things then it can doe
“ for you. You will then, if you con-
“ sider it, joyn your selves heartily to
“ me, though now you are ready to fly
“ off; and not think my Cross such a
“ scandall, that it should hinder you from
“ being Christians.

X. And that will be one of our next works, in the following Chapter, to shew the power of *Christ's* Resurrection to perswade us, that by his Death He will give life to the world. Let us first onely briefly consider, that there are some other Circumstances, besides this now mentioned, which declare there was something ex-

ceeding remarkable in the Sufferings of *Christ* on the Cross, to procure him great glory. For we find that *Nicodemus*, one of their Senatours, who durst not publickly own our Saviour while he was in great favour with the people, came, now that he was crucified and exposed to scorn, and brought a mixture of *myrrh* and *aloes*, about an hundred pound weight, (xix. *Job.* 39.) to honour his Corps withall. Which would be a stronger argument of the thorough conviction already wrought in his mind, if there be any truth in the conjecture of a learned Man *, that these spices were intended not to embalm him, but, as the manner was upon great occasions, to burn at his funerall. Thus far he is certainly in the right, that the honour of having sweet spices burnt at their funerals appertained to no other persons but onely their *Kings*, (2 *Chron.* xvi. ult.) and the Head of all the Doctours, the *Nass*, as they called him, of their Academies. And he notes likewise truly out of *Joseph ben Gorion*, that when the funerall pomp of *Herod* the Great was carried forth, fifty of his servants are said to have scattered all the way they went those verry things which *Nicodemus* brought, viz. *Myrrh* and *Aloes*, and all other sweet spices,

* *Jac. Al-*
ring. Schi-
lo, L. iv.
c. 26.

spices. But whether we can hence conclude that *Nicodemus* now honoured him by these as the *King of Israel*, and the *Prince of all the prophets*, I cannot tell ; because the Evangelist (ver. 40.) seems to tell us, that the use they made of these spices was to imbalm his body, which *they wound in linen cloaths, with the spices, as the manner of the Jews was to bury.* Yet this we may safely conclude, that he would never have put himself to so great a charge, and laid out so much upon his dead body, if he had not seen something which convinced him that this was *that King of Israel*, who would give him a reward, for his love and open confession of him, in his heavenly Kingdome. There was nothing to move him to such an expence, upon such an hated person, but onely a perswasion that *Jesus* was what he pretended ; and an assured hope that by this flesh, which now lay dead, the World should be restored to life.

Yea, such power there was in his Death to affect mens hearts, that not onely the Centurion confessed him to be *a righteous man*, but all the people who were come together to that sight, beholding the things that accompanied his sufferings, were

Gem. Sanh.
c. vi.

were prickt in their consciences, and *smote their breasts*. xxiii. *Luk.* 47, 48. They could not, that is, but expresse their sorrow for this horrid fact of shedding his BLOOD, and dread the dismall consequences of it. Insomuch that, though it was forbidden by the Constitutions of the *Sanhedrin* to make any lamentations for a malefactor; yet they were not able on this occasion to forbear it. Their own Writers tell us, that it was a part of the honour they did to a deserving person, when his funerall was carried out, to accompany him with sighs and groans and tears, and beating themselves, and such like tokens of their inward grief for his loss. With which the Holy Scripture agrees, when it names this as part of the Curse of God upon *Jehojakim*, that none should so much as sigh at his buriall, nor make the usuall lamentation, saying, *Ah my Brother! Ah Lord! or Ah his glory!* xxii. *Jer.* 18. From whence it is likely they passed a Decree, that when any person suffered by a publick sentence for a crime, none should presume to grace him with any ceremony, nor use the least outward sign of heaviness, though in their hearts they might mourn for him. But this Decree and Custome settled by the Authority of their
supreme

supreme Court, the esteem which our Saviour wone to himself, even when he hung upon his Cross, forced the people to break. Their affection to him was stronger then all Laws; and they could not contain themselves when they saw what testimonies heaven gave of his innocence and vertue; but did him publick honour even at the very place of execution. Though he suffered as the highest and vilest offender in the world, yet the honest-hearted spectators were not onely inwardly troubled in their breasts at the sight, but beat or knockt them also; and shewed thereby, that they were not afraid to own him as a most Excellent person, whose death they ought to accompany with the bitterest lamentations.

And so much may suffice concerning the Testimony of his BLOOD; which no man can hear speak a word, but he must needs think, that which got him such honour among the people in the midst of his shame and the reproach of the Cross, obtained a far greater glory for him with God in the heavens, who best knew how to value his obedience.

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Proclus
Homil. xi.

O wonderfull Passion, the Expiation of the World! O Death, the cause of Immortality, and the origin of Life! O descent into Hell, the bridge by which those who were dead passed into Heaven! O Noon, which hath revoked the Afternoon-sentence against us in Paradise! O Cross, the cure of the fatall Tree! O Nails, which wounded Death, and joyn'd the world to the knowledge of God! Great was the victory which He that was incarnate for us obtained on the day of his passion. He grappled with death, when he was dead. Hell and the grave this day ignorantly swallowed a deadly morsell. To day death received him dead, who always lives. To day the chains were loos'd which the Serpent made in Paradise. The Thief this day made a breach on Paradise, which had been guarded by the flaming sword some thousands of years. This day our Lord broke the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder.

Which of the great Men, that ancient times boast of, are comparable to him? All the just fell under the power of death, and none could conquer it. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, are all turn'd to dust and ashes. The memory of Joseph, in whom the Jews glory,
lay

lay in his dry bones, which they carried out of Egypt with them. Moses is extolled by them to the skies, but there is not so much as his tomb to be found. Such as these, and so many, death devoured and swallowed them all down. But at last it swallowed one, and against its will vomited up the whole World. Who now triumph over it, and cry with a loud voice, O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord.

His Passion is our impassibility: His Death is our immortality: His tears, our joy: His buriall, our resurrection: His Baptism, our purification: His stripes, our healing: His chastisement, our peace: His reproach, our glory. How much are we indebted to him, who from first to last consulted our happiness? For he descended, that he might make way for our ascent. He was born, that he might make us friends with the Unbegotten. He took on him our infirmities, that we might be raised in power, and say with St. Paul, I can doe all things, through Christ which strengthneth me. He took on him a corruptible body, that this corruption might put on incorruption. He put on mortality, that it might be changed into immortall. In fine,
He

S. Athanasius $\pi\epsilon-\pi\lambda\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\sigma\iota$ $\pi\epsilon\pi\lambda\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\sigma\iota$ $\pi\epsilon\pi\lambda\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\sigma\iota$ p. 598.

Id. $\pi\epsilon\pi\lambda\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\sigma\iota$ $\pi\epsilon\pi\lambda\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\sigma\iota$ $\pi\epsilon\pi\lambda\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\sigma\iota$ p. 1002.

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He was made Man and died, that we who die as men might be deified, and death might no longer reign over us.

O blessed and life-giving Cross of our Saviour, which triumphed over death, and destroyed him that had the power of it, which is the Devil! O divine Word, and true Wisdom of the Father! thou hast overcome the Devill, when he thought he had been a conquerour *. O Lover of men, and gracious Lord! thou hast both redeemed us that were captives, and freed us, by thy own death, who were servants of sin. O Son of God, the true Peace-maker! thou hast both given us the adoption of Sons, and reconciled us to thy Father; having destroyed the enmity by thy flesh. O rich Saviour, and true King! who becamest poor, that we by thy poverty might be made rich; and hast given to us the Kingdom of heaven. O Creatour and former of all things, the Word of the Father! for thou hast created us again; we are thy workmanship created unto good works. O Light indeed, the brightness of the Father! for thou hast enlightened us that were in darkness, and hast brought us that were blind to see the light. O Likeness and reall Image of the Father! for thou hast formed us who were lost, and again

* August.
de Trinitate,
L. 13.
c. 15.
Cat. ex
Athanasio
p. 1022.

again restored the image of God in us. O God, the Word and Life indeed! for thou hast quickned us who were dead, and renewed us that were corrupted, and cloathed us with immortality. O thou Power indeed, the arm, the right hand of the Father! for thou hast both loosed the bands of death, and broken the prison-doors in pieces.

God forbid that we should glory, save in 1b. pag. 1028. the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. To this let us adhere; let us walk worthy of this. And thus living and believing, we shall know also his assumption into the heavens, and his session on the right hand of the Majesty on high. We shall behold the subjection of Angels to him, and his coming again with glory. Which Angels have foretold; which Saints sing of in their hymns; and which when we all see, we shall rejoyce and be exceeding glad in Christ Jesus. By whom be glory and dominion to the Father, world without end, Amen.

CHAP. XI.

*Concerning the Testimony of
the SPIRIT, the Third
Witness on Earth.*

THough the Children of *Israel* were so strangely delivered out of their bondage, being saved by the Bloud of the Paschal Lamb from the destroying Angel, and then freed from *Pharaoh*, who thought, it's like, that his bloud must next of all pay for the keeping them in *Egypt*: yet still they questioned whether they should come into the good Land or no, and were at a sad plunge when they came to the Red Sea; imagining that they themselves should be there destroyed, and become the next Sacrifice to *Pharaoh's* cruelty. To confirm them therefore in their belief of God's kind intentions towards them, and perswade them thoroughly that *Moses* had not brought them out of *Egypt* to kill them, but to save them, He gave him power to doe great wonders at that place, and in

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the

the rest of their journey; which, added to the Miracles in *Egypt*, were a strong conviction that God was among them, and was conducting them by the hands of his Servant to their long-desired Rest. This was the last Argument and the most constant, whereby he demonstrated the truth and reality of his promises of bringing them to the land of *Canaan*. They saw *his signs and his wonders, his mighty power and stretched-out arm, all the great acts of the Lord*; (as they are called xi. *Dent.* 7. which Chapter be pleased to reade unto that verse;) which were eminent tokens that GOD had taken them to be a peculiar, or speciall, people to himself, as he frequently speaks, and was able to fulfill his word to their Forefathers, of giving them the Land, wherein they were then strangers, for their inheritance.

Just such as this is our case, whom He hath called by his Son to *an inheritance incorruptible and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us*. To obtain an eternall Redemption for us, and deliver us out of the hands of all our enemies, his own most precious BLOOD was shed, as of a *Lamb without spot or blemish*.
Where-

Whereby also, as you have heard, he testified to the World that he was no Deceiver, but came to them from God with the *words of Eternall Life*. Many things concurred to make this BLOOD a *witness* of his Truth, and of his power to fulfill his own promises. And yet, notwithstanding, this was the very thing that offended many, and kept them from following him. They could not endure so much as to hear him speak of giving them *his flesh to eat, and his blood to drink*; though he told them thereby he would *give life to the World*. And therefore to strengthen this Testimony of his BLOOD, and to convince them evidently that he was the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the World, and gives life to it, there was another *Witness* which attended it, both before his BLOOD was shed, and likewise afterward; which was the SPIRIT. That is, as I shewed in the former Treatise on this subject, *the power he had to work wonders; and the miraculous power which raised him from the dead, and presented him to God in the heavens*. This was abundantly sufficient to prevent any offence they might take at *Christ crucified*; and to settle in their hearts an unmovable be-

lief that he was their mighty Redeemer,
 who would bring them to the eternall
 Rest which he had promised. For this is
 the last and greatest argument which St.
John here produces, ver. 6. *He came not
 onely by WATER, but by BLOOD
 also; and it is the SPIRIT that beareth
 witness, for the SPIRIT is the Truth.*
 Or, as *Arias Montanus* translates it, the
SPIRIT is (τὸ μαρτυρεῖν) that Witness,
 that undoubted testimony on which we
 may certainly rely. For τὸ πνεῦμα that
SPIRIT which I speak of *is truth*; an
 infallible Witness, which cannot deceive
 you, that *Jesus is the Son of God.* And
 so it is likewise, that *Eternall Life* is in
 him; and that we shall enjoy it by his
 means: for this RECORD of God is
 given to make us as sure of the one, as
 we are of the other.

Let us briefly therefore consider, *first*,
 what his *Miracles* say to this; and then,
secondly, what force there is in his *Resur-*
rection and Exaltation to prove it.

I.

And at our entrance upon the first of
 these, let us, before we go any farther,
 weigh

weigh those words of this Apostle St. John in his Gospel, xx. 30, 31. where he tells us that he wrote the *signs which Jesus did* (suppose after his Resurrection) *in the presence of his disciples*, for this very purpose, *that they might believe that he was the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing they might have LIFE through his Name.* They were wrought by *Him*, and recorded by his *Disciples*, for these two ends: that the World might be convinced He was the great Lord of all; and that they might, by faithfull subjection to him, look for *Eternall Life* from his omnipotent love. It was the design of all his wonderfull works throughout his whole life, (to which the Apostle may have respect as well as to those after his Resurrection,) to perswade men to believe that he would make his followers so happy. For by these *he manifested forth his glory*, (as I observed before of the *beginning of his Miracles in Cana of Galilee*, ii. Joh. II.) and declared to the world, he could work as great a change upon our mortall bodies as he did then upon the *Water*; making them as much nobler then they are now, as the *Water* excelled it self when it was become *Wine*. They were mighty instances of his Power; and

of his Goodness too : they made him appear to be the *King of Israel*, who was to *deliver* and bring *Salvation* to them; though much greater then they expected.

Cap. xi.

That our Lord did work Miracles, is a truth which they that crucified him can no more deny, then that he died. The wisest of them could never find any colour to affirm that the Gospel-story was but a fabulous Legend, which related Wonders that were never done. For if they had been able to say this, *Maimonides*, the very best of them, would not have been put to such distress, as to let fall these words, which we read in his *Treatise of Kings* : *Do not imagine that the King Messiah shall have any need to work wonders, or alter the course of Nature, or restore the dead to life again, with such like things, that fools talk of.* Had he not known as well, that these things could not be denied which are related of *Jesus*, as he did that, their force to prove any thing being granted, they would be an unanswerable testimony to him, he would never have thus slighted (as he doth in many other Books) things of this nature; which brought the greatest reputation to *Moses* among their ancestors,

cestours, and were the cause why they believed on him, though he attempted no such wonder as the raising dead men to life again. Our Saviour, he was not ignorant, very often appealed to his *works*, as the testimony of God to him; and thought it sufficient to tell *John's* disciples, when they came to inquire who he was, that *he opened blind mens eyes, cleansed lepers, and raised up the dead*; by which they might answer their own question. And therefore something was to be said by this *Jew* to disparage these, upon which he saw the credit of our Saviour in great part relied. Now had it not been the readiest way to deny that there were such Miracles wrought? Nothing but the notorioufness of the facts made him wave that course; which drove him upon this wretched shift, of denying utterly that Miracles are credible witnesses to him that works them. By this means he thought to rob our Saviour of the glory they brought him; and was so blind as not to see that, at the same time, he took away from his own Master the greatest support he had of his Authority. And therefore herein he is deserted by his own Country-men, particularly by *Abarbinel*; who, as I observed before,

makes the power of working Miracles one of the principall gifts of the *Messiah*. In which our Lord, it is apparent to his very enemies, was so eminent, that one cannot imagine why he did not believe on him; unless, with the spitefull *Pharisees*, he imputed all his Works to the Devill. Which blasphemy, I have shewn in the former Book, is so manifestly confuted by his holy Doctrine and Life, that they must be no less foolish then malicious who regard it. We ask no more, but to allow such things were done as the Gospell reports: (which they dare not deny us:) and then their great uncertainty what to say against them, shews how forcible they are to convince all indifferent men that he came from God; whose finger they were, pointing them to him as the Person whom they should hear and obey.

And that they were a plain demonstration of his power to give *Eternall Life* to all his followers, will appear from these following considerations.

I. If they confirmed all his Doctrine to be the Will of God, then we ought to look upon this as firmly established by them;

them; for it was a known part of his Doctrine, that God sent him to proclaim his purpose of giving everlasting life by him, to all those who should believe on him. vi. *Joh.* 38, 39, 40. iii. 16. There is nothing in this assertion needs proof, but that they confirmed his Doctrine, (this being, it is apparent to all, a constant part of it;) in which the Blind man thought he could presently satisfy any reasonable person, when he said, *If this man were not of God, he could doe nothing.* ix. *Joh.* 33. That is, no such Miracle as that was, of opening the eyes of one born blind; a thing the world had never heard of, since it was first created, till that time. He preached nothing but piety and holiness; He lived as he preached: both his Sermons and his Conversation were above all that ever had been for Sanctity: And his Works being so also, much beyond the most famed Prodigies the world had ever boasted of; it was an unanswerable argument that God was in him; who was never known to have let such things be done before, in the compass of so many Ages; and therefore would not let them now doe their first Service to the countenancing of a lie. And therefore to these our Lord often
refers

refers them, as there was reason, for a proof of his Divine Authority. For if a false prophet could doe such wonders, how should there be any possibility of ever knowing a true? Reade x. *Joh.* 37, 38. xiv. 10. xv. 24.

That which is most proper for me to note is, that in that xiv. of St. *John*, when he bids them look upon his *Works*, as the best glas (that then was) wherein to see his Divinity, he was discoursing on this very subject, that *He was the Life*, ver. 6. and that *He was going to the Father* to live with him, and to *prepare a place for them*, &c. ver. 2, 3. Of this he could not give them a better evidence then the *Wonders* he had wrought, untill his *Resurrection*. After which indeed (he saith ver. 12.) they should *doe greater works then these*; which would more plainly tell them that he *was with the Father*. It will not be unprofitable if I open the whole discourse, from vers. 2. where he tells them, with a solemn profession he would not abuse them, that *in his Father's house are many Mansions*; and that he was *going away* indeed from them, but it was in order *to prepare a place for them*. He departed, he would have them believe,

believe, not merely to go to rest himself after all his labours; but to take up lodgings, as one may say, for them in that blessed Rest prepared for the people of God. Now the consequence of this he tells them in the next words, ver. 3. *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto my self; that where I am, there ye may be also.* He assures them, that is, he would not lose the pains he had taken to procure such a happiness for them; but see them safe there, where they should have their share with him in that very bliss which he was about to receive. *And where I go, ye know, and the way ye know:* ver. 4. As if he should have said, You understand well enough what I mean: (for I have often spoke of these things:) I go to Heaven, to live with God, and to give life to those that believe on me; which that you may not miss of, I have shewn you both by my doctrine and my example the way that leads to it. Alas! replies one of his Apostles, who seems to be the slowest of all other to apprehend his meaning, or give credit to him, *Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we find the way?* ver. 5. No? saith our Saviour to him again, that is strange. *I my self*

am the Way, from whom you might have learnt how to arrive at this happiness. And that this is the true way, which I have described, you need not doubt; for *I am the Truth*; that is, the teacher of truth, who have demonstrated severall ways, that what I declare is the very mind and will of God. And the same arguments which prove me to be the Truth, evidently shew also that *I am the Life*; who will conduct you to that bliss unto which I am now going. *And no man cometh to the Father*, (and that Eternall life which is with him,) *but by me*; that is, by believing my words, and following my steps: ver. 6. And therefore if you had minded me and my words, (as it follows ver. 7. *If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father* also,) you would have known it is my Father's purpose to give you Eternall life: And from henceforth sure you will not doubt of it, now that I have revealed it so plainly, that I may say *you know him, and have seen him*. Upon this Answer of our Saviour, another of his Apostles wisht they might but see the Father, and that would be *sufficient*: ver. 8. He desired, that is, there might be some such Divine appearance to them, as there was to *Abraham*

ham and others of the Patriarchs in old time, and they would trouble him with no farther questions about this matter. How? saith our Saviour, *have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?* that is, understood what kind of person I am? Dost thou not see that I am the onely-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth? the express image of his person, and the brightness of his glory? Was there ever such an appearance of God in the world, as thou seest in me? All the Fathers enjoyed was but a little glimpse of the Divine glory, in comparison with that which now shines upon you in my face. And therefore why dost thou ask to see the Father, as if there was nothing of him in me? I tell thee, *He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.* And so it follows ver. 10. *Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of my self; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.* The properties of God are known by the works that he doeth; and there are such wonderfull evidences of a Divine power as well as wisdom in me, that all the Visions the Prophets had, together with all the Miracles they did,
were

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were not such a testimony of a Divine Presence with them, as these are that the Father dwelleth in me. Therefore *believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me* ; ver. 11. (that is, take my word for it, that you See the Father, as you desire, by seeing me ;) *or else believe me for the very works sake.* Let these, at least, convince you that I am as nearly related to him as I pretend ; for they are such as can come from none but from God alone. *Σύνθετος ἀπόδειξις καὶ παρὰ τῆς τοῦ Πατρὸς φύσεως, ὁ υἱός,* as St. Greg. Nazianzen speaks ; *The Son is a brief and easie demonstration of the Nature of the Father* : who appeared in him, and spake by him, and declared both how good and how powerful he is, not onely by all that our Saviour said, but by the Works that he did. Which were most manifest tokens that God was in him ; and that his words were the words of God ; and , consequently, that in him we have life ; and that he went to heaven, as he said, to prepare a place for us ; and that he will come again, and receive us unto himself, if we walk in that way which he hath chalked out to us by his most holy Life.

Orat.
xxxvi.
p. 590.

This

This our Saviour asserts also in other places, where he alledges his *Works* as an evidence of this very Doctrine. I shall mention onely two more, and so dismiss this Argument. In the v. *Joh.* 28, 29. he tells the obstinate *Jews*, it was no such marvell that a dead man should be raised up by him; if they considered, which was far more wonderfull, that he was the Person who would one day call all mankind out of their graves, and give unto the good *Everlasting Life*. For proof of which he puts them in mind presently after of his *miraculous Works*, (ver. 36.) which testified God had sent him, and would verify all that he said. And thereupon he exhorts them to *search the Scriptures, for in them you think ye have eternall Life; and they are they which testify of me. But you will not come to me, that you may have life*: ver. 39, 40. Which was as much as to say, You all look for ETERNALL LIFE, and you hope in the Holy Scriptures to find it: I wish you would be more diligent in perusing them; for they shew plainly that I am He who must bring you to it. But this is the misery of your condition, that neither my *Works*, (spoken of before) nor the *Scriptures*, nor the testimony

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testimony of *John Baptist*, (which he first alledged ver. 32, &c.) will perswade you to believe on me ; without which I cannot bestow Life upon you.

The same he tells them x. *Joh. 25.* where he saith, *The works that I doe in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.* They made it so apparent; that is, he ought with all readiness to have been received, that he could not judge, as you reade in the next verse, their infidelity came from any thing but improbity. Now what it was his works witnessed, he tells us ver. 27, 28, 29, 30. viz. that to his sheep, who were obedient to him, he would give *Eternall Life* : of which they should have such a sure possession, that they should never lose it ; because none should be able to wrest them from him, with whom God himself had intrusted them ; who would maintain and defend them, and their right to it, without any possibility of plucking them out of his hands. His Father, he means, had appointed him to bestow this Life on all his followers, who was able to make good his own purpose and promises. And therefore as the Works he did made it appear that He and the Father were one ; so He would

would certainly make good the Doctrine which he preached, (and thus by Miracles confirmed,) that they should *have Eternall Life, and never perisb.*

II. This we may reasonably think his Miracles declared, if we consider the nature and quality of every one of them; which, in generall, was the doing of some good or other to mankind. What did this speak, but that He was come to be the Authour of the greatest happiness to them? They could not well pick less sense out of his Works then this, when they saw him bestow such benefits, that He was of GOD, *who is Good, and doeth good*, and would never cease his loving-kindness to the World. For the multitude and the constancy of his Miraculous acts of bounty, in so many places, to all sorts of men, throughout his whole life, declared the largeness, the universality, and unchangeable perpetuity of his Goodness; which would withhold no good thing from upright persons. And therefore in his Answer to the Question which *John's* disciples proposed, you find his opening the eyes of the blind, cleansing the lepers, making the lame to walk, and such like miraculous works, in conjunction with

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his

his preaching the Gospell to the poorest people; which was nothing else but this glad tidings of *Eternall Life*. xi. *Matth.* 5. This he published so plainly as none before him had done; and that they might be disposed to believe him to be the person in whom all nations should be blessed, He did such Miracles as none before him had done: which were all blessings, the greatest favours and kindneses to mankind; but no hurt to any one man in the world. This was a greater Argument to receive him as the Authour of *Eternall Life*, which he promised, then the wonders in *Egypt* were to perswade the *Israelites* that *Moses* should redeem them, and bring them to temporall felicity: inas-much as the constant doing innumerable benefits to men renders one far more acceptable, then the killing and destroying them.

III. But then, if you more particularly consider, that a great many of his Miracles were the restoring men to their primitive state of integrity and soundness of body, by removing the sicknesses and diseases which Sin had brought upon them; it was a notable sign that He was the Healer of Nature, the Restorer of the World,

World, the ~~Saviour~~ Saviour of mankind ; who could bring them back to that blessed immortality which they had lost. Whence it was that, when he cured the man sick of the palsy, in stead of saying, Be well, he said, *Son, thy sins are forgiven thee*: to shew that He had power to remove the punishment of sin, and so make them immortall.

IV. The like another sort of Miracles seems to suggest to us; which was his feeding so many thousands at a time with a small quantity of provisions. Of which you reade (as in other places, so) in vi. *Joh. 5, 6, &c.* where you find, that with *five barley loaves and two small fishes* he entertained about five thousand people so plentifully, that every one of them had as much as he desired: and when they had done, there were twelve baskets of fragments, which remained over and above to them that had eaten. This Miracle made the multitude conclude that certainly He was *the Prophet* who should come into the world: and therefore they purposed, whether he would or no, to come and make him *their King*: ver. 14, 15. And when he avoided it by crossing the sea privately, (ver. 16, 17, &c.) they also

took shipping to follow after him, and never rested till they had found him: ver. 24, 25. Whereupon our Lord takes occasion to tell them, how sorry he was to see them so industriously pursue the food of their bodies, and not mind the food of their Souls, to which his late Miracle led them: and in plain terms tell them, that Spirituall food was himself; who was the *Bread of life* they should hunger after, more then for the loaves wherewith they had been filled: and that if they did eat of him, they should have *everlasting life*, and he would raise them up at the last day, ver. 26, 27. and 35, &c. This they might easily have believed, if they had considered the Miracle of the loaves; which was a token from God that he could support them eternally. For why should not he be able to give life, who so strangely preserved it? and out of a little dust make a body, as he had out of a few crums made so many loaves? If their desires had been fixed upon this *Eternall Life* which he preached, as much as upon the present, they would as naturally have taken this Miracle for *the Seal* whereby God noted him to be the giver of it, as they took it to be a mark that he could thus fill their bellies every day, and

and save them the labour of seeking food; after the manner that *Moses* fed their Fathers with Manna in the Wilderness.

V. And next to this, if you consider how he dispossessed Devils, which was a Wonder as frequent as any, it told the world plainly that He was come to *destroy the works of the Devil*, to overthrow his kingdom, and devest him of his power, unless they would still uphold him in it. By Sin he held his Throne; this gave him all the power he had over men, and made them his vassals and slaves. Who being so often rescued out of his hands, and he so openly foiled; it was a sign that *Jesus* was come to take away the sins of the world, and thereby disarm him of the power of death, and restore men again to that everlasting Life, out of which the Devil had before thrown mankind, as our Saviour now threw him out of them. All this the *Jews* themselves confess shall be the work of the *Messiah*. According to what we read in the Authour of the Book concerning *the Service of the Sanctuary*, who saith, "that the King *Messiah* shall restore all things to their first estate, so that the intention of God shall

" be fulfilled which he had in the Crea-
 " tion of the World ; for the World shall
 " return to that naturall perfection which
 " it had before rebellious *Adam* sinned.
 " The Prophets are faithfull witnesses of
 " this, as it is written lxxv. *Isa. 19. I will*
 " *rejoyce in Jerusalem, and joy in my peo-*
 " *ple; and the voice of weeping shall be*
 " *no more heard in her, nor the voice of*
 " *crying.* And so he speaks also in ano-
 " ther place of that Book , xxv. 8. He
 " *will swallow up death in victory, and*
 " *the Lord God will wipe away tears from*
 " *all faces.* The Authour also of *Baal Hat-*
 " *turim*, as I find him cited by *Hackspar* *,
 confesses as much in his Notes upon xix.
Num. where he saith, *In the times of Sal-*
vation (or the days of *Christ*) *there shall*
be nouse of the Askes of the red heifer, ac-
cording to that, He will swallow up death
in victory. Which words are cited by
St. Paul *I Cor. xv. 54.* (as the other part
 of that verse is by the voice *St. John*
 heard from heaven, *xxi. Rev. 4.*) when
 he is treating of the Resurrection of
 the dead, as the great comfort of *Chri-*
stian people. Who may well expect it,
 and all the blessings that attend upon
 it, from our Lord *Jesus*, the true *Mes-*
siah, if to all that hath been said we
 adde

* *Cabala*
Judaica
Señ. 72.

adde the consideration of what follows;

VI. That he raised even dead men to life again : which was the greatest Miracle of all, and at that time the greatest witness of the SPIRIT to him. This shew'd that indeed he had Life in himself, and would bestow it upon us, as I have already noted ; for he raised them on purpose to declare what he was, and what they might expect from him, viz. a perfect victory over death and the grave. Which appeared most remarkably in the resurrection of *Lazarus* ; who was the most famous instance of this power residing in him. For the Miracle wrought on him was not so little as the recovering one who drew his last breath, (which was the case of the Centurion's Servant;) nor the restoring one to life who was newly dead, (as in the case of the Ruler of the Synagogue's daughter;) nor the raising a young man who was carried out towards his grave, (as the Widow's son was :) but *πρὸς τὸ ὑψηλότερον ἢ θανάτου ποῖα περὶ ἐρχεται*, as *Greg. Nyssen* speaks *, his Wonder-working proceeds to something more sublime. A man of grown years, not onely dead, but musty, already putrid, and in a dissolution, (as he

* De Homini-
nus opi-
ficiis cap.

describes his condition,) so far gone toward corruption, that his own friends thought it not fit our Lord should go to uncover his tomb, because of the ill smell which might be expected; this man, I say, with one word of our Lord's, was restored again to life, firm and compacted: and though he was bound hand and foot with grave-cloaths, it did not hinder his coming out of his grave; which, as *Theophanes* thinks, was a Miracle little less than his Resurrection. Who can chuse but look on this *ἀνοεὶ τὰ περτέλεια τῆς καὶ δολικῆς ἀναστάσεως*, to use the same St. Gregory's words, as the *beginning* (the *little Mysteries*, as I may call them,) of the *Universall Resurrection*, into which *Christ* now initiated his Disciples? For it is apparent by this, He is the *Lord of Life*, who can raise a putrid rotten carcass, as well as those who are but newly departed the world.

And this was no private business transacted onely between him and his Disciples, but a thing so notorious, that the *ὄχλος* the *multitude* who were there present bare record of it. xii. *Joh.* 17. That is, they affirmed it to be no vain report, but told those of *Jerusalem* (whither our Saviour

Saviour was then going) who had not seen the Miracle done, that it was a certain Truth upon their knowledge. Which they might affirm with the greater assurance, because, as *Theophanes* * observes, they were confirmed in this belief by the testimony of all their senses. "By their own voice, which shewed him the Tomb, saying, *Come and see*: and his loud voice, which they heard saying, *Lazarus, come forth*. xi. *Joh.* 34, 43. By their sight, when they beheld him, whom they knew very well to be dead, obeying his word. By their smell, when they perceived the ill sent, as they rolled away the stone. By their touch, when they loosed his hands and his feet, as our Lord had them, and let him go. By all these they were so well satisfied, that there was no room left for their infidelity; nor much for the *Pharisees*: who knew neither how to confute this Testimony, nor how to avoid the consequence of it. They began now to despair of prevailing against him any other way, then by taking away his life; which their malice made them design against the clearest light. Though that also proved, as you shall see presently, but a farther confirmation of the truth they

* *Archiepif.*
Taurom.
Hom. xxx.

they sought to obscure, by his rising again from the dead. And they could have found in their hearts to have killed *Lazarus* too; because, as long as he lived, he would proclaim this Miracle to the honour of *Jesus*: who hereby gave such an illustrious testimony that he was the Authour of *Eternall Life*, that just when he was going to raise up *Lazarus*, he inculcates this Doctrine, as the fittest season to impress it upon them. xi. *Joh.* 25, 26. *I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die.* *Martha*, it seems, believed this before, upon a perswasion that he was *the Christ, the Son of God, that should come into the world*: ver. 27. But when she saw *Lazarus* come out of his grave, then sure she believed it more strongly; both because it was a farther argument that he was *the Christ*, and likewise included in it that very thing which he propounded to her belief, viz. that *He was the Life*, and would give life unto those who were dead, if they believed on him.

I shall conclude this part of the SPIRIT's Testimony with those words of our

our Lord himself, viii. *Joh. 50.* where he protests that *he sought not his own glory*; that is, assumed not to himself this great power, to be the Life of the world: but *God the Father sought it*; i. e. persuaded the world of it, by the illustrious Miracles which he wrought; whereby *the Father honoured him*, (as he says ver. 54.) and passed such a judgment on him, that we may all conclude, as he doth ver. 51. *Verily, verily, if a man keep his words, he shall not see death.*

II.

Of which we shall be the more confident, if we adde now the other Witness of the SPIRIT to him, which was *in raising him from the dead, and giving him Glory at God's right hand.* This was a greater Wonder then all that preceded; sufficient to satisfy those who still remained doubtfull. For "if any body (as *St. Greg. Nyssen* discourses in the Book before mentioned) should use those words of our Lord in another case, and apply them to this business, saying, *Physician, cure thy self*: it is but meet that he who did such wonders on other mens bodies to prove a Resurrection, should

“ should give an example of it in his own.
 “ We have seen one nigh to death, another
 “ newly dead, a young man ready to be
 “ laid in his grave, and *Lazarus* already
 “ rotten; all these by his word recalled
 “ to life: Let us see one live again who
 “ was wounded, and had his heart pier-
 “ ced, and his blood shed, one who we
 “ are sure was dead. Come then, and
 “ look upon *Jesus* himself; whose hands
 “ and feet were pierced, into whose side
 “ a spear was thrust. Come, and look
 “ upon him who bled to death. And if
 this man was raised from the dead, (nay
 more than that, ascended into heaven,)
 as abundance of credible witnesses testi-
 fie; what doubt is there left, that by
 him God will give us a blessed Resurrec-
 tion unto immortall Life, if we be obedi-
 ent to him? They that saw the one (*viz.*
 his Resurrection and Ascension) could
 not but stedfastly believe the other: and
 have told us that he was *raised* and *glo-*
rified on purpose that our faith and hope
might be in God. I Pet. I. 21. This was
 the great design and end of first opening
 his grave, and then opening the heavens
 to him; that our confidence in God
 might revive again, and we might hope
 by his favour to have the honour of be-
 ing

ing made the sons of God, by being the children of the Resurrection.

That our Blessed Saviour was really dead, as the History testifies, his greatest Enemies always confessed, and still acknowledge. He hung a long time upon the Cross; there he bled; and at last his side was wounded with a spear in the vitall parts. All the spectatours were satisfied that he had given up the ghost: and the Souldiers, when they came to break his legs, as the manner was, found the work already so effectually done, that there was no need of it. He was wrapt in Cerecloaths, laid in a grave, and given up by all his Friends for a lost man. But that after all this he was as really alive again as he had been before, is testified by divers sufficient Witnesses; and among the rest by one of his principall Enemies, who was thoroughly convinced of it. The Apostles saw him very often; they spake with him; they felt and handled him; one of them put his finger into the very print of the nails, and thrust his hand into his wounded side. They eat and drank with him; they received Commissions from him: and after he had shewn himself alive to them by many infallible proofs,

proofs, being seen of them forty days, he ascended up to heaven in their sight; and from thence, according to his promise, they received the Holy Ghost; *i. e.* in his Name did all sorts of Miracles, raising even dead men to life again. And after all he appeared from heaven to *St. Paul*, (a man that set himself vehemently against him, and breathed nothing but threatnings and slaughters against his Disciples,) whom he turned quite to be on his side; perswading him so fully that he was indeed risen from the dead, that he became, as you have heard, a most zealous preacher of it with the continuall hazard of his life. This is a more credible History then any other: (as it were easie to shew, if it were my present business:) and we may better doubt of all Records, then of those wherein the memory of these things is preserved. They were holy, devout and self-denying persons, who report these things upon their own knowledge. And they are reported not by one or two, but by many of them; who met with nothing in the world to tempt them to tell a lie, but with a great many things to deterr them from publishing so odious a Truth. And therefore if we will not doubt of every thing we do

do not see, we cannot refuse to believe that *Jesus* did indeed rise again after he was dead and buried, and ascended into heaven. Which being supposed, (for I shall say no more of it here,) there is no man can have the face to deny *the Resurrection of the body*, and *Life everlasting*, which *Christ* our Lord hath promised us. There can be no truer reasoning then that of *St. Paul*, *1 Thess.* iv. 14. *If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.*

I. For thus much is evident at first sight, and is included in the thing it self, that this work of the SPIRIT proves a possibility of the Resurrection of the dead, and shews that we mortal creatures, who live on the earth, may live in the heavens. So the same Apostle argues elsewhere against those who denied this Truth. *1 Cor.* xv. 12. *If Christ be preached (upon such credible testimonies as he mentions in the foregoing verses) that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? It is the grossest absurdity, that is, to say there can be no such thing as the restoring of a dead body to life; when it is*
so

so evidently verified in *Christ's* resurrection. Which shews it is so far from being impossible or incredible, that it is a thing which hath been done already ; as is very well attested by Witnesses that cannot with any equity be rejected. And by the same reason he proves we ought not to despair of seeing our bodies made glorious and incorruptible. For if He be not in his grave, (as none could shew him there after the third day,) but is made glorious ; why may not we partake of the same favour, by that power which raised *Christ* from the dead, and set him at God's right hand ? There is no reason to doubt of it ; but the greatest reason to hope and be confident, that *He who raised up the Lord Jesus* (as *St. Paul* speaks in the next Epistle, 2 Cor. iv. 14.) *will raise up us also by Jesus, and set us in his presence in the heavens.*

II. For by his Resurrection the S P I R I T proved the truth of all that the other Witnesses, *the Water, the Blood,* and his Miraculous *Works* too, testified. Particularly it demonstrated the truth of his *Doctrine*, by which, as you have seen, *life and immortality was brought to light.* If this had not been true, that we shall live

live for ever by him, *Jesus* would have perished, and never have come to life again, to deceive the World the second time. But seeing God did not leave his Soul in hell, nor suffer his *Holy* (i. e. his anointed) *one* to see corruption; it is an uncontroulable argument that those who believe on him shall not perish neither, but be made alive as he is. Because He that said he would rise again the *third* day, said likewise with the same assurance, that at the *last* day he will raise up us also, and bestow upon us everlasting Life. When God (who alone could doe it) verified the one, and according to his word raised up *Jesus* the third day; He bid us be assured of the other, that this *Jesus* hath Life in himself, and will by his power raise up us, according to his promise, unto a never-dying life.

This is the Character He had given of himself, *I am the Resurrection and the Life*; that is, the Authour, the Cause of both: *He that believeth on me shall have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day*; nothing of him shall perish, neither his Soul nor his body; for even *they that are in their graves shall hear his voice*, and shall rise again to life. This

he often preached, and proved many ways: but after all he sealed it with his blood, and bad them expect a little, and they should see it sealed by his resurrection from the dead. Which insuing at the time appointed, was a perfect demonstration that he said true, when he affirmed that He is the *Resurrection and the Life*; by whom we shall receive this inestimable benefit of rising again after death, to live for ever with him. Of this as well as the former Consideration I may possibly say so much elsewhere, that I shall spare any farther pains about them now.

III. Let us rather remember how severall persons rose from the dead at that very time when he left his grave: (xxvii. *Matt.* 52, 53.) which were notable instances of his power to give life; and put us in hope that we shall all rise again as they did. There is no cause but his Resurrection to be assigned of this Miracle, which fell out the same time that he was missing in his grave; as the opening of their tombs, at that very moment when he died. Never was any such thing heard of before or since; and therefore it was intended to demonstrate the mighty power

er of his Resurrection : when *many bodies of Saints which slept arose, and came out of their graves, and went into Jerusalem, and appeared unto many.* Whose testimony none have had the confidence to contradict by endeavouring to disprove it ; but the *Jews* rather by some concessions of theirs confirm us in the belief of it. For it is a common opinion now among their *Doctours*, that *the Kingdom of the Messiah shall begin with the Resurrection of the dead.* Bury me, said *R. Jeremiah*, with shoes on my feet, and my staff in my hand, and lay me on one side ; that when *Christ* comes, I may be ready. But of this conceit we can find no footsteps in the Old Scriptures ; which makes it probable that they have borrowed this, as they have done many other things, from the Holy Gospel, in which it is recorded, that he began his entrance upon his Kingdom with the Resurrection of some pious persons, as an earnest of the restoring all the rest to Eternall Life. And thus it is likely they have learnt to discourse of the bodies of the just after they are raised ; concerning which some of them speak so sublimely, above the dull and gross conceptions of the rest of their Nation, that one can scarce look upon

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*Vid. Jo.
de Voyfin
in Pug. fid.
part. iii.
dist. 2. c. 8.*

*Vid. eum
de Lege
Div. in
xxii. Matt.
30.*

it otherwise then as Christian language. *When the Soul is in the state of glory, (saith the Book Zohar,) it sustains it self with the light above, wherewith it is also cloathed: and when it shall return to the body, it shall come with the same light, and with the body shall shine as with the brightness of heaven.* More there is in other Authours to the same purpose, which say, God can give us bodies strong and vigorous like the Angels; and that the bodies of the just after the resurrection shall be subtil like the globe of the Moon, and so give no impediment to the Soul, in its enjoyment of the Splendour of the Divine Majesty.

But supposing this to be their own language, without any tincture they had received from the Christian Doctrine, it will be still more remarkable, that our Lord Jesus (according to their expectations from the Messiah) should begin to raise the dead, when he went to take possession of his throne. A plain sign that he is the Resurrection and the Life; from whom we may confidently look for bodies, not onely bright as the Moon, but that shall shine, according to his faithfull promise, like the Sun, in the Kingdom of

of the Father. Concerning which things if the Apostles had written false, and there had not been *many* able to *bear record* of the rising of these *holy persons*, and coming into *Jerusalem*, as well as of the rising of *Lazarus*; there would have been pens enough in those days imployed to confute them, and proclaim the forgery. And these *Jews* would have been as carefull preservers of such confutations, as of any their most beloved Traditions; which can never doe them so much service, as those volumes would have done.

IV. Nor is there the least shadow of reason to question the Testimony of those who saw him *ascend into heaven*, and, as a token of his being inthroned there, received from him, ten days after, the gift of the Holy Ghost. Which compleated the demonstration of his power and purpose to give *Eternall Life* to all his followers. For,

I. His very Ascension into heaven (as it breeds in us a belief of a glorious state in the other World, so it) evidently shews that it is possible such as we may be translated thither: And though our

Bodies now be but lumps of living clay, yet they may one day be snatched, as he was, from this dull globe, to shine among the Stars. And the Angels also appearing both at his resurrection and ascension, and waiting upon him unto heaven, shew that its gates are no longer barred against us, but set open again to give us a free admission into it. For they who were set to watch the way to Paradise, and guard it so that none should enter, voluntarily lent their assistance to transport Him thither, after they had brought the joyfull news of his being risen from the dead.

2. But this is the least comfort we receive from thence; for his glorification at God's right hand, when he came thither, advances our hope to a greater height; and shews that it is not onely possible, but certain, we shall be taken up above to be with him. His Kingdom, it is apparent now, (by his sending the Holy Ghost,) is supereminent over all; and nothing can be out of the reach of his power. For it is a power over all Creatures *in heaven and earth and under the earth*, who doe obeisance to him, and cannot resist him. ii. *Phil.* 10. i *Pet.* iii.

ult,

ult. And a power to doe all things : for God hath put *all things* under his feet. 1 Cor. xv. 27. A power of conferring all dignities and honours ; iii. *Phil.* 21. and of removing all impediments to our preferment, He having the *keys of hell and death.* i. *Rev.* 18. In short, a perfect power to doe all things to make us glorious. For in that he put *all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him,* as the Apostle argues ii. *Heb.* 8. And though he hath not yet exercised his whole unlimited power, as it there follows, yet we are sure he hath it ; because we see (by manifest arguments) *Jesus crowned with glory and honour for the suffering of death.* By which the all-wise God thought fit to *consecrate this Captain of Salvation ;* who he designed should *bring many Sons unto glory together with himself.*

3. Which He will not fail to doe, we may be sure, being thus *perfected* and completely furnished for the very purpose : because this Royall power wherewith he is invested is a kind of Trust ; and he hath received it (as *St. Paul* plainly supposes 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25, &c. where he speaks of his Kingdom) not onely for himself, but

for the good of all those whom he rules and governs. For the Apostle concludes that he, having a Kingdom which must at last be resigned into the hands of God the Father, will first put down all rule, all authority and power, and leave no enemy unconquered; no not Death, which will onely be the last that shall be subdued, but subdued and destroyed it must be: ver. 26, 27. Nay, our Lord himself acknowledges his Kingdome to be a trust, when he says, xvii. *Joh. 2. Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternall life to as many as thou hast given him.* Whence it is that he often protests, *it is his Father's will, that of all he hath given him he should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day, &c. vi. Joh. 39, 40.* For as the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me: ver. 57. And in expresse terms he saith, as I have shewn before, that he went away to prepare a place for us. And therefore is bound by his office, we may conclude, to promote us to that glory and honour in the heavens, which it is his Father's will, he knows, should be bestowed on us.

4. And who can doubt at all of his fidelity in this, who was so faithfull in all other things; most punctually, for instance, making good his promise of sending the Holy Ghost, as an earnest, I have often said, of this immortall inheritance? None can imagine he will now prove negligent in that, which by his place he stands ingaged to perform; when upon Earth he did the will of him that sent him with such exactness, that he rewarded him for it with that high dignity which he now enjoys in the heavens. Therefore his greatest care was to assert and prove his *power* to give *Eternall Life*. Of his *will* he thought there need not much be said; for none could doubt of it, after they saw him die for them, and then express such love, after his resurrection, as to send the Holy Ghost upon them.

5. This is abundantly sufficient to secure all considering persons of so desirable a Good. Which the Apostles began confidently to expect, as soon as ever they were satisfied of the resurrection of our Lord from the dead. Before he ascended to heaven their thoughts ran thither,

thither, and they began to see that he was the Lord of life and glory. For as soon as *St. Thomas* was convinced by a palpable demonstration that he was risen, he cried out, *My Lord, and my God.* xx. *Joh.* 28. This is the first time that any of his Apostles gave him the title of *their GOD*; when they were fully satisfied, as *Grotius* observes, by his Resurrection, that he would give Eternall Life to them. And then it was also, you may note, that he first gave them the title of *his Brethren*, who should share with him in the glory to which he was going. xx. *Joh.* 17. xxviii. *Matth.* 10. *Go tell my Brethren that they go into Galilee, &c.* In which words he alludes, as *Eusebius* observes, to those xxii. *Psal.* 22. *I will declare thy name unto my brethren.* He never called them so before, till he was after a new manner declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead: And now to own them for his Brethren, was as much as to say, that they should be made the Sons of God by their resurrection, and be coheirs with him. To prove which new Brotherhood the Apostle to the *Hebrews* brings that place of the Psalmist now mentioned, ii. *Heb.* 11, 12. *He is not ashamed to call them*

them Brethren, saying, *I will declare thy name unto my brethren.* Whence he is called the *first-born among many brethren*, viii. Rom. 29. Whom he bids them that first saw him alive again inform, that he ascended to *his God and to their God, and to his Father and their Father* : to shew them, that they might safely repose such a confidence in God as he had done; and hope to be raised by him from the dead, as he was, and receive a *portion* with him in the heavenly inheritance.

6. This Relation which he owns to us gives us the greatest confidence to look upon him as *our HOPE*, (as St. Paul speaks 1 Tim. i. 1.) *the HOPE of Glory*, 1 Col. 27. For it is certain that when any person is advanced to a throne, his bloud is thereby enriched : all his family, I mean, are raised and dignified ; his children especially put into the quality of royall persons, though never so mean before ; nay, made capable of succeeding him in his state and greatness. Now our Lord hath a family as well as other persons ; all those who believe on him being acknowledged by him, not onely to be his *brethren*, but his *children* : who, living by his faith, are really descended from

from him ; and therefore by his resurrection are also begotten again unto a lively hope of an incorruptible inheritance. i. Pet. i. 3, 4. Whence the same Divine Writer, who observes how he calls them Brethren, immediately shews how he owns a nearer relation to them, saying, *Behold, I, and the children which God hath given me :* ii. Heb. 13. who in him are all advanced to the highest honour. His glory makes them illustrious : for *if children*, saith St. Paul, *then heirs ; heirs of God, and joynt-heirs with Christ.* viii. Rom. 17.

Who is not to be considered merely as a single person, but as the Lord and Head of a Body or Corporation of men ; who are so one with him, that the raising him to so great a glory as he inherits, is the raising and ennobling them. A sure pledge, that is, that the same shall be done for the *Members*, which was for the *Head* ; who will not be without them, but make them partakers of the same benefit which is bestowed on him. He is like the *first-fruits*, as St. Paul discourses, (in his Chapter of the Resurrection, i Cor. xv. 20, &c.) a *second Adam*, the head and beginning of a new Creation ; by whom all shall as surely be made

made alive, as in the *first Adam* all died.

7. Why should we doubt of it, since he was carried to heaven, as they that received the Holy Ghost testified, *to appear before God with his blood for us* ? ix. Heb. 23, 24. This is a very great argument that we have *Eternall Life*, and that it is *in him*; for this Sacrifice of himself being accepted by God, (the *Eternall SPIRIT*, which offered him to God, presenting him before him without spot or blemish,) must needs take away sin, and remove all hindrances to our admission into the very same place where he is, as that Epistle proves at large. *By this offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified; and we have απαρτια, liberty and freedom* (without any lett or impediment) *to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus*. x. Heb. 14, 19. Who is such an High-priest over the family of God as is *set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens*; (viii. 1.) and being consecrated for evermore, is become the *Authour of eternall Salvation unto all them that obey him*. v. 9. vii. 28.

8. To whom therefore we ought to draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, that he will not fail to imploy his power to make us happy with himself. Which, you may consider once more, he most earnestly prayed for when he was on earth : it being one of his last requests to his Father, that *those whom he had given him, might be with him where he is ; that they might behold the glory which he hath given him.* xvii. Joh. 24. And therefore having obtained such a power over all as hath been described, by his precious blood which he was then going to offer ; we may rest assured he will not let us be without that of which he was so desirous before he left the World, now that he is in heaven with full power to fulfill his own desires. For it is unreasonable to suppose that a Friend, who earnestly beseeches another to grant us a favour, will not most readily doe it himself, when he becomes as able to bestow it as he of whom before he askt it.

But the fear of swelling this Treatise into over-great a bulk makes me pass over these things with the bare mention
of

of them, and omit many other. I shall put an end therefore to this last Testimony of the SPIRIT with those remarkable words of St. Peter, in his *second Epistle*, ver. 3, 4. of the *first Chapter*: Where he saith, as we translate him, that *the Divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and vertue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, &c.* The meaning of which in a larger form of words is plainly this.

“Account that *grace and peace* which I
“have wisht you in abundance (ver. 2.)
“from God and our Saviour, no small
“blessing: For God hath in a most excellent, omnipotent manner bestowed
“on us all things that are necessary for
“our future happiness and felicity, and
“for our present conduct in piety, which
“is the onely way to that Eternall life.
“And if you ask me how he hath given
“us these things in so resplendent, godlike a manner; I’le tell you: it is
“through the knowledge of him that hath
“called us; that is, through *Jesus Christ*,
“the true *Word* of God, who hath called us to piety and happiness. And
“if you enquire again, how you shall
“know

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“ know that what he saith is true, and
 “ that he calls us not merely from himself,
 “ but from God, who directs us by him
 “ in the right way of *godliness*, which
 “ will bring us to everlasting *Life*; I’ll
 “ resolve you in that also: for he hath cal-
 “ led us *διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀρετῆς*, by (so it is
 “ in the margin) *glory and vertue*. How
 we come to render it *to glory and vertue*,
 I know not, for it makes the sense ob-
 scure; whereas otherwise it is perspicu-
 ous and clear: and as if the Apostle had
 said, “ The *Glory and Vertue* which ac-
 “ companied his preaching, or presently
 “ followed it, is a very strong argument
 “ to induce you to believe that he taught
 “ the way of God in truth; having re-
 “ vealed all things pertaining to life and
 “ godliness, as God himself attests. For
 by the *Glory* wherewith he called us, *i. e.*
 preached the Gospell and perswaded us
 to believe, we are to understand his
Transfiguration on the holy Mount;
 where *they saw his glory*: ix. *Luk.* 32.
 and to which the Apostle afterward ap-
 peals ver. 16, 17. of this Chapter, as a
 justification of the truth of their Ministry.
 The coming down also of the Holy Ghost
 at his Baptism, the voices from heaven,
 (in one of which God said he would glo-
 rise

rise him again as he had done already,) and the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, are here also to be understood by *Glory*: for *by these* we are called and moved to receive the knowledge of him. And then by *Vertue* is undoubtedly meant that very thing which I last treated of, *his* mighty power in miraculous works, and the mighty power of the SPIRIT in raising him from the dead. For it is well observed by *Drusius* and others, that ἀρετή *Vertue* in these holy Writings never signifies, as it doth in heathen Authours, Piety and morall goodness in opposition to *Vice*; but *power* and might in opposition to *weakness*. And therefore by this word the Greek Interpreters of the Old Testament render the Hebrew word כבוד, which denotes the Greatness, Majesty and height of God's excellency; and sometimes the word נצח, which signifies *strength* and *stoutness*. According to which in the New Testament it denotes either the mighty power of God, (as here in this place;) or else our courage and valour, as in the fifth verse of this Chapter. But it is no-where found in the sacred style used for *piety*: and therefore we must not render the particle δὲ to,

F f

but

but *by*, vertue; that is, the power and mightiness of God's arm or strength, (as the Scripture speaks) by which our Saviour convinced the World that God the Father had sent him to give Life unto it.

Thus the Apostle St. *Paul* saith, (which will very much explain this,) that He *was raised up from the dead* διὰ τῆς δόξης τῆ Πατρὸς, *by the glory of the Father.* vi. *Rom.*
 4. That is, by his glorious power, as *Camerero* well renders it: for his power appeared most gloriously in that wonderfull Work, whereby, as St. *Peter* here speaks, he called us to believe on him. So we are to understand him, it appears by another Argument. For if we should say we are called *to glory*, (understanding thereby heaven,) we could not be said to have *precious promises* (as it follows) *hereby given to us*: For this would be to say, that by calling us to heaven he hath called us to heaven. But if we take these words the other way, then the sense runs currently, and delivers to us this excellent Truth; "That by such
 " means as I have treated of, (the Descent
 " of the Holy Ghost, the Transfiguration
 " of our Saviour, the Voices from heaven,
 " the Miracles he wrought, the might of
 " his

“ his power which wrought in him when
 “ God raised him from the dead,) he per-
 “ swaded men to receive him as the one-
 “ ly-begotten of the Father ; who was
 “ come, by his authority, to shew them
 “ the true way to everlasting life. By
 “ these we know that we are not cheated,
 “ but that he who hath called us is the
 “ Son of God ; by whom we are sure to
 “ attain everlasting life, if we follow those
 “ directions he hath given us, which will
 “ infallibly bring us to it.

And then the next words (ver. 4.) are
 still more pertinent to my purpose, *δι’
 ὧν* whereby, or by which, (**GLORY** and
VERTUE) are given unto us exceeding
 great and precious promises. “ We are so
 “ sure to attain eternall life, that we have
 “ many promises of it ; which are so
 “ strongly confirmed, that we cannot
 “ doubt of them, being delivered in such
 “ a divine manner. For when he gave
 “ them it was *διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀγαθῆς*, by glory
 “ and vertue, with such demonstrations of
 “ his Authority to promise them, and of his
 “ power to make them good, that we can-
 “ not but depend upon his word. None, I
 suppose, question but by these great, these
 precious, yea exceeding great and precious
 promises,

promises, he means those of raising us from the dead, and carrying us to heaven, to live with God, and that eternally. These are the chiefest things of which our Lord hath given us such assurance, when he called us to believe on his Name. Things which as much exceed all that was promised *Israel*, as the heavens are wider then the smallest spot of this earth. More precious are they then all lands, if they flowed with milk and honey: more to be desired then gold, yea then much fine gold, then all the gold of *Ophir*: more to be valued then the Crowns of Kings, which are not so much as an Emmet's Egge in comparison with this Happiness. Now as there is nothing that can be compared with these promises; so we have no testimony on Earth comparable to this of the SPIRIT, that exceeding greatness of his power, whereby these promises were brought to us, and assured to be infallible. For by this we know that He hath all power in heaven and earth, and is able to doe whatsoever the Father Almighty doeth; that is, give life to the dead, which is the property of the Almighty alone. So the Enemies of our Religion are forced to confess, who say there are *three* keys which God keeps to himself,

himself, and commits to none of his Embassadours, *the keys of the womb, the keys of heaven, and the keys of the grave.* Thy power, saith Joseph Albo speaking of God, *is not the power of flesh and blood; for the power of flesh and blood is to put those to death who are alive, but thy power is to raise those to life who are dead.* The very same we may justly say of our Lord Jesus Christ, who challenges this power to himself, as I have noted before out of the *first* of the *Revelation*, where he tells St. John, *I have the keys of hell and of death*, ver. 18. He was no ordinary Embassadour, but can doe more then any whom God sent into the world ever did or could. He can raise even the dead bodies of his subjects to life again. And when he hath *lifted them out of the dust*, (if I may apply the Psalmist's words to this purpose,) can *set them with Princes*; even with the Princes of his heavenly Court, to praise and bless his love among those great Ministers, the Angelicall powers, for ever and ever. Which is a power he doth not assume to himself vainly, but was conferred on him by God the Father; who raised him from the dead, and gave him glory: wherein St. John beheld him

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when he said, *I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I live for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.*

Georg.
Nicomed.
Serm. ix.

Great is thy Majesty, O thou most mighty *Jesus!* whose power is not the power of flesh and blood, but the power of God, who raises those to life who are dead. Great was the joy which filled thy Disciples hearts when they first saw thee alive from the dead, and called thee *their God.* None can understand the beauty of that sight. O the brightness of that appearing! What a light diffused it self then through the whole Creation? What a fragrant smell did the very earthquake breath forth, when like a publick crier it proclaimed the Resurrection? What was the savour of the ointment which was then poured out? How was the whole world then transformed and made new? The Angels themselves leaped for joy to see it. How sweet was the sound then of their doxologies? With what divine splendours were they then adorned? How beautifull did those preachers of thy resurrection appear? and how great was the glory and the happiness which they came then to proclaim? O

those

those Words of theirs, which brought us the news of victory over the Enemy! which proclaimed the destruction of Death; and published thee to the World, the Resurrection and the Life!

O that sweet and above all things desirable voice of thine, which, by the women that were carrying spices to thy grave, sounded joy to the World! The Heavens then opened their gates, and received the glad tidings which were brought to us, as if they had been their own. The Intellectual powers rejoiced, and took a pleasure in our happiness. The Spirituall as well as Sensible World was inlightned. The clouds of sadness were dispelled, from one end of the world to the other; and the rays of joy possessed all. Guilty Nature put off the robes of heaviness, and was cloathed with garments of light. The hand-writing of the Curse was torn in pieces, and promises of Blessing were sealed in the room thereof. By that new Salutation, when thou saidst ALL HAIL, the world was filled with the sweetest and everlasting joy.

For thou art the Preacher, and the Cause, and the very Exultation of all joy;

the Author of good things; the giver of pleasure; the joy which can never be taken away; the sweet light; the spectacle above all others desirable; the intellectuall tranquillity and peace; Wisdom it self, and Power; Incorruption and Eternity; Security and Delight; the onely unchangeable and inconceivable Beauty; Sanctity it self, and Honour and Righteousness, and Glory above measure glorious. O how many Names would my Mind bring forth to express thine unutterable excellency! It is onely my weakness that hinders, and want of words. But thou who art the infinite, not to be named Good, far above all the titles that Mind can invent; whoregardest not words, but rather an inflamed heart; who thy self broughtest the joyfull news of thy Resurrection; shine now into our Minds by the bright beams of thy appearing. Let us see intellectuall the superexcellent beauty of the intellectuall Sun. Let us inwardly injoy the incomparable sight of our Lord and Master. Let us hear his divine voice speaking some sweet and joyfull word to us. O thou gracious Lord, come; and draw us from these present things, as out of the lowest deeps: and leading us safely to that never-decaying life, number us among the quires of
those

those that keep perpetuall festivals above.
For thou art both light and life, and re-
surrection, and the joy of those that tri-
umph in the heavens. To thee it becomes
us to give, together with the Father and
the Holy Ghost, glory, honour and adora-
tion, now and ever, world without end,
Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Concerning the Testimony of
the Holy APOSTLES
of our Lord.

There is nothing now wanting to compleat this Discourse, unless it be to shew that, if the Testimony of the APOSTLES of our Lord be at all intended, when St. John saith, *He CAME by Water and Blood and the Spirit,* (as in the former Treatise I proved we have reason to think it is,) they also bear Witness to this Truth; and by them God hath given us this *Record*, that *we have Eternal Life*, and that *this Life is in his Son*.

That Jesus had Disciples the Talmudists themselves confess: who tell us in the same place where they speak of his being hanged on the evening of the Passover, that they were *five*; MATTHAI, NETZER, NEKAI, BUNI, and THODA. They do not love to speak the truth,
but

*Talmud
Bab. Tit.
Sanhed.
c. vi.*

but to the *Four Evangelists* (to which perhaps they have respect) they have added one more : and report not one of their names aright, except the first; and in the last have a little varied from the Name of *Judas* the Brother of *St. James*. But thus much we gain from their own Records, that known Disciples our Saviour had; who professed to believe on him, and owned him for their Lord and Master. These persons, we can make no question, would be carefull to communicate to the World what they had received from him; because they lookt upon him as the Son of God, and esteemed his words as so many Oracles, which his Crucifixion could not disparage. Accordingly there are Books that pass under their Names, besides the four Gospels; which no man ever laid any claim to, or pretended to be the Authour of, but onely themselves: and therefore we have no cause to think they were not of their inditing.

Now if you examine them, you will find that, after his Ascension to heaven, and the coming of the Holy Ghost, their business was to go about and preach this *Truth*, and the *certainty* of it, to all the
World,

World, as their Lord and Master had delivered it to them. They were so fully perswaded of it, that they could not forbear to publish such glad tidings of great joy to the whole Earth. It was the very end of their Apostleship, and that which moved them to undertake so great a task; as St. Paul tells us, when he calls himself an *Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of Life, which is in Christ Jesus*: 2 Tim. i. 1. appointed by God, that is, to publish the promise of Eternall Life which he had received from *Christ Jesus*; who would certainly give it to all that believed on him. And it is the very Character which the other great Apostle gives of himself, 1 Pet. v. 1. that he was a *Partaker of the glory that shall be revealed*. This encouraged him to be a *Witness of the sufferings of Christ*, as he saith just before, and not to be daunted, as he had been, though he followed him to a cross; because now he clearly saw he had a right as a Friend of his (so the word *nowadays* signifies *Philem. 17* *) to a share in that unseen glory where He was, which should one day be revealed.

* Vid.
Scipion.
Gentil.
ibid.

In

In this they desired that all mankind might have a portion with them, (1 *Joh.* i. 3.) by becoming Members of their Society. And therefore it was the constant strain of all their Sermons, to invite them to it, by shewing that *Jesus* will reward well-doers with the Crown of Life; and be so far from letting their labour be in vain, that he will doe for them as his Father hath done for him, viz. bring them into his own joy. So St. *John* writes in the very beginning of his Gospel, i. 4. that *in him was life, and the life was the light of men*. He brought the promise of Eternall Life, that is, to mankind, and can himself bestow it; which is the best news, the greatest cordiall, that can be thought of, to revive our spirits: like the honey on the top of *Jonathan's* rod, inlightning our eyes, and making us live most chearfully and happily, if we believe it, and prepare our selves for it. This they laid as the very ground and foundation of all Christian piety; unto which St. *Paul* saith it was his office to call men, *in hope of eternall life*, (1. *Ti.* i, 2, &c.) which God, that cannot lie, promised of old, but did not manifest till the preaching of the Gospell, which was
com-

committed to him by the commandment of God our Saviour: who authorized him to open this Doctrine more fully, then it had been even by our Lord himself while he was on Earth. For St. *Paul* shews that, *at the last day*, so often mentioned by our Lord, he himself will appear again in person, after a visible and glorious manner, to consummate all the faithful; whose happiness begins as soon as they depart this life. These *two* weighty Truths are notably asserted by this Apostle.

I. Who declares by the *Word of the Lord* (that is, a special revelation from our Saviour) the manner of his coming again from heaven, with the attendance of his Angels, to raise the dead, and to lift them up to himself, and give them the Crown of righteousness; which till that time shall not be bestowed. Reade *1 Thess.* iv. 15, 16, &c. *2 Tim.* iv. 8. where the splendour of that great day, when he will openly appear as the Lord of all, is described no less lovely then magnificently; as I hope to shew in another place. It is *the day of rejoycing*, ii. *Phil.* 16. because he will then most eminently appear as *our life*; iii. *Col.* 4. as *our Salvation*; *1 Cor.* v. 5. ix. *Heb.* 28. *to the praise and honour*

honour and glory of our fidelity. 1 Pet. i. 7. And therefore for this time Christians are said to *wait and look*, 1 Cor. i. 7. ii. Tit. 13. as the time that will compleat their felicity; which till then, the Apostles plainly suppose, wants its Crown and perfection. And so the Church hath from the beginning understood them. Who describe Souls departed as in a state of *Expectants*, waiting for the appearing of our Lord *Jesus Christ*: who will come out of his most holy Temple to perfect those who now stand, as they speak, *ἐν προθύρῳ*, in the porch or entry of it; *ἐν αὐλῇ*, as the Latin phrase is, in the outward Court of the Temple or holy place of God. For as the Children of *Israel* stood in the outward Court, (which yet was a part of the *ἱερόν* or Temple, as we render it,) expecting the Priest every day to come out of the Sanctuary, and the High-priest on the day of expiation to come out of the Holy of holies, to give them the blessing: In such manner do the Ancients describe the now blessed waiting and looking without (though in Heaven, of which the Sanctuary was a figure,) for *that blessed hope* of our Lord's coming out of his Most holy place, where he now is, without sin unto their Salvation.

vation. And thus the best of the *Jews* express their happiness, saying that pious Souls are in *the bundle of life*; (as the most learned Dr. *Pocock* shews out of *Judah Zabara*, *) in the *high place*, in the *treasury*; * *Not miscell. cap. vi. p. 176.* where they enjoy the *splendour of the Divine Majesty*, being *hidden under the throne of glory*. Which phrases signify a state of imperfection, in comparison with that which our Lord *Christ* (with whom, saith the Apostle, *our life is hid*, and kept in safe custody,) will bring us unto at the day of his appearing.

II. But all this time they do not imagine that their Souls lie asleep, without any sense of joy and pleasure; no more then the *Israelites* did, who were at their Prayers all the time that the Priest was in the Sanctuary, desiring God to accept his intercession for them. For what good doth it doe them to be *in the Garden of Eden* or pleasure, (as the *Jews* also call the place where they live,) if they have no taste of its fruits and happy enjoyments? They would be as well any-where else as in the *Bosome of Abraham*, (by which the same *Jews* *, as well as our Saviour, describe this state,) if they do not feast there, as that expression properly signifies; and

* *Vid. Vcys fin de Jus bil. L. i. c. 164*

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as the Parable of *Lazarus* supposes he did, when it saith, that *now he was comforted*, or enjoyed *his good things*, which made a recompence for all the evill he had here suffered.

Orat. X. p.
173.

The sense of the Christian Church in this matter is admirably expressed by St. Greg. Nazianzen. Who comforting himself and others for the losse of his Brother *Cæsarius*, concludes with these words : *I am perswaded by the words of the Wise, that every Soul that is good, and beloved of God, when it is loosed from this body to which it is tied, straightway* *μαοία τινὰ ἡδονὴν ἡδέλαι καὶ ἀγάλλεται*, *conceives a certain wonderfull pleasure and rejoyces exceedingly, in the sense and contemplation of the good it expects. Which makes it go most chearfully to its Master ; because, being got out of its prison, and having shaken off its fetters, which pinion'd the wing of the mind, οἷς ἦν τῇ παντοία κατεστῆται τὴν ἀποκριμένην μακάριον, it already enjoys, as it were, an image of the Blessedness laid up for it. And not long after receiving, out of the earth from whence it came, and where it is deposited, its nearly-allied body, (in such a way as God, who tied them together and dissolved them,*

them, knows,) it shall together with it inherit the glory there.

And thus St. Paul also plainly teaches us ;

1. When he relates how he was transported into the *third heaven* and into *Paradise* ; and for any thing he knew, out of his Body. 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3. Which evidently shews he believed, that Souls could act without their bodies, and that they shall enjoy God, and have a sense of heavenly things, as soon as they depart this life. And so much the *Jews* themselves well conclude from the *Spirit of Prophecy* ; whereby holy men of God were separated for a time from their bodies, so as to perceive nothing either by their senses or their minds, but onely what God presented to them. The phantasms, indeed, which they had received from this sensible world, were commonly used to represent those things which were then offered to them by Divine Revelation : but without any assistance of the motions of the body, which lay then as if it was dead ; while the Soul enjoyed converse and familiar discourse with God. In which condition, it is manifest, St. Paul's mind was so intent to what was communi-

cated unto him, that he did not at all observe whether he had a body about him or no. But there is more then this, if you mark it, in St. *Paul's* transport into Paradise; where God spoke to him *ἀρρητα φηματα*, mysteries which he could not declare by any words, because no phantasms or images of things he had seen or heard here in this world could express them. Which is a sign he conceived them without any motion of his brain, merely by his Spirit.

* *Sepher*
Cofii part.
3. § lxx.
Tzemach
David
ad An.
498.

Of such transports the *Hebrews* themselves talk, who say *four* men entred into Paradise *: (that is, by the spirit of prophecy:) *one* of them was too curious, and died presently; *another* proved distracted after it; a *third* pluckt up the roots, or denied the foundation of Religion, saying, *אני הגעתי* I have already touched the mark, I am come to perfection, and therefore need not mind the work of the Law any longer; a *fourth* entred in peace, and came out again in peace. Which I recite not as a truth; (for all these stories are told of men who lived since the spirit of prophecy left them;) but to shew that they think it not impossible for men to be transported

ted as St. *Paul* was, (to whom, I imagine, they were ambitious to equall some of their Doctours,) but by the power of the Spirit they might enter, while they were inhabitants of this world, into Paradise. Of the sweet enjoyments of which place therefore they cannot sure be incapable, when they have quite left this body : since the Apostle supposes his spirit might go out of it in this rapture ; when it perceived and understood things without the use of phantasms, after the manner of Intelligences.

2. Wherewith he was so ravished, and so fully assured of future bliss as soon as he died, that he desired above all things to be dissolved, and to be with *Christ*, which he lookt upon as far better then to stay here any longer. i. *Phil.* 23. This eager longing clearly shews what he expected, as soon as he was got loose from this body : and that he did not think death would stupefie his Soul, and bereave it of all sensation ; but rather open to it a freer passage into that delightfull place, whither he had some time been caught up. For it would not have been better for him to depart, and to be with *Christ*, if he should not have had the fa-

your to enjoy that sweet conversation with him there, which was not denied him whilst he was here. He tells us indeed, that when our Lord shall appear, then is the time when we shall *appear with him in glory*; but before this he expected upon his departure to be *with Christ*, though not in so full an enjoyment of him as hereafter. This made him so confident and well assured in his perpetuall conflicts with so great troubles and calamities, because he lookt upon himself in this present bodily state but as a stranger, who was absent from his own country and friends; to whom he desired to return even in this way, through the midst of many afflictions. 2 Cor. v. 6. Which he repeats ver. 8. *We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord.* So we render this phrase ἐνδμῖσαι ver. 6. when he speaks of his being in the body. From which I conclude, that he thought his Soul, which while it did ἐνδμῖσαι ἐν τῷ σωματι, inhabit the body, had such a sense of future happiness, as made him resolutely endure all manner of troubles to come at it, would much more enjoy a blissfull sense of it when it did ἐνδμῖσαι πρὸς τῷ Κυρίῳ, dwell in its own country with the Lord.

3. Hence

3. Hence you reade that those who were dissolved, or rather whose souls were torn out of their bodies by the hand of cruell persecutours, cried unto God for vengeance on their murtherers. vi. *Rev.* 9. Which argues Souls departed do not sleep, and think of nothing that passed here; but are so awake, as to remember the gracious promises of God, which they live in expectation to see fulfilled. It may be said indeed, that by *ψυχαι* Souls we are to understand onely their *Bloud*, as the word is sometimes used in the Holy Scriptures; and as I thought, when I writ the former Treatise*, it might be taken here. But upon farther consideration I find reason to correct that mistake: For St. *John*, I observe, speaks of them as *persons* (ver. 11.) who had *fellow-servants* and *brethren* here upon earth; who were to finish their testimony to *Christ* by laying down their lives for him, as they had done. Till which time those *Martyrs* were to rest and acquiesce in what they enjoyed already; having obtained very great honour: For there was given *ἐκαστος* to every one of them *white robes*. Mark the place, and you will be satisfied fully

* *Vid.*
Chap. viii.
p. 501.

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* Mr.
Thorndike
Rights of
the Church
p. 95. 310.

that he speaks not of their bloud. For St. *John* saw these Souls *ὑποῦ τοῦ τῆς θυμιάματος*, under or beneath the Altar; of incense, that is, (as a Great man hath proved * :) whereas the bloud of the Sacrifices was poured out at the bottom of the Altar in the outward court. They were not *without*, but *in the Sanctuary*; though in the lower part of it, beneath the Altar of incense; not yet advanced to the higher part of it, much less to the Holiest of all. They were admitted, that is, unto a greater nearness to God than others, (as the Church always believed the *Martyrs* were,) though not yet consummated; as the Apostle St. *Paul* supposes himself should not be till the day of *Christ's* appearing. But St. *John* adds, (2.) that they had *white Robes* given them in that place where they were: which signifies they were a kind of heavenly Ministers attending on the Divine Majesty; or that they had exceeding great honour conferred on them: (xli. *Gen.* 42.) which would have done them no good at all, if they had not been sensible of the favour of God therein, and lived in great joy and festival pleasures; which white raiment also in the holy languages uses to denote. ix. *Eccles.* 8.

And

And thus the *Jews* themselves, I observe, are apt to speak of this matter; making the description of the City and Temple in the latter end of *Ezekiel* to be a representation of the other World. For when it is affirmed by one Doctour in the *Talmud* *, that there were not above six and thirty just men in every Age that *behold the face of God*; and another objects, that the Court about the City (called *The LORD is there*) was exceeding great, no less then eighteen thousand measures round; *xlvi. Ezek. 35.* this Answer is returned, that the difficulty is small: For some behold *the very light of God*; others onely *see it obliquely*, and have no more but *a certain obscure dusky image of it*. There are but few of the former, saith the *Glosse* there, who have the *Light in its power*; but of the other, who have a *weaker ray, obliquely* and at a *distance*, there are very great numbers. Which agrees with those words of our Saviour, *In my Father's house are many Mansions*, as they are expounded by the two *St. Gregories, Nazianzen and Nyssen*, and others: who by a *Mansion* understand τὴν ἐκείθεν ἀνάπαυσιν *, &c. the rest and the glory which is laid

* Vid.
Coch.
exc. Gem.
Sanhedrin
c. xi. n. 30.

* Nazianz.
Orat. 33.

laid up there for the blessed; but suppose some to be in a *higher*, others in a *lower* condition, proportionable to the virtuous dispositions they carried out of the world with them. Which being very different, they believed some to see less; and others to be like *Gorgonia*, the Sister of *St. Greg. Nazianzen*, whom, in the conclusion of his Eleventh Oration, he supposes to be *in the clear light of the glorious Trinity*.

4. But it would take up too much room in this Treatise, if I should enter into that discourse: and therefore I proceed to consider, that though they made this difference, according as we see in a City (to follow the former comparison) some are accounted the chief, others the more inferiour streets and houses, and some are nearer unto, others more remote from the royal palace: yet they did not imagine those mansions to be dark, nor those that were in them to have their eyes shut up with sleep; but all to enjoy the light of life. *They lead, as another Jewish Writer* * *speaks, a most sweet life in that light, which is the figure and resemblance of the supreme light, to which they shall be admitted at the last. Thus Moses*

* *Vid. Jo.
de Vovsin
de Jubilae
L. i. cap.*
16.

Moses and *Elias* appeared in great splendour at our Saviour's transfiguration on the Holy Mount; where they talkt and discoursed with him about his *departure*, that he was to accomplish at *Jerusalem*. Which shews, they not onely continued in being, but had sense, and motion, and lived in much happiness and bliss. Which we are not to take for a singular privilege indulged to them; for the Apostles, you may observe again, lookt upon our Saviour as the *ἐκὼν* *exemplar* or *pattern* to which God had determined they should all be *conformed*. viii. *Rom.* 29. And their conformity to him here in this world being so exact, that they passed the very same way to bliss that he did, through most cruell sufferings; they could not doubt but upon their departure the conformity would still hold as exactly. That as He, when he died, immediately went to *Paradise*; (where he promised the good Thief should be, before his Resurrection;) so they should enter into the same blessed place immediately upon their death, and live there in a joyfull expectation of him, to come and change even this vile body, that it may be *σὺμμορφος* *conformed* to his glorious body. iii. *Phil.* 21.

And

And this is the sense also, you may observe once more, of the *Voice from heaven*, which commanded St. John to write, *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.* (xiv. Rev. 13.) With which the Spirit immediately joyned its testimony, saying, *Nai, Yea* (i. e. it is certainly true, believe what the voice says,) *from henceforth*, or now at this present, I promise them a blessed rest from their labours; and their works shall follow with them: that is, they shall be refreshed with a sweet remembrance of what they have done and suffered for Christ Jesus. It is uncertain indeed whether the word *Ἀπὸ* be to be referred to the former words, *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord*; or to those that follow, *Yea, saith the Spirit*: But either way our Church understands it in the same sense, as appears by the Funerall office. Where, referring it to the former sentence, the words are thus recited; *I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, From henceforth* (or Now, at this present time) *blessed are the dead, &c.* They are not onely in expectance of future blessedness, but in possession of an happy state already; and find inconceivable satisfaction in venturing their very lives for Christ's sake:

fake: who for this very end, as St. Paul observes, laid down his life for us, that whether we wake, or whether we sleep, we should live together with him. 1 Theff. v. 10.

There are those who from this word Sleep (by which the state of the dead is frequently called in these books, there being nothing liker Death then Sleep,) would infer the perpetuall motion and operation of the Soul before the Resurrection. For it is very busy and active, even when all the Senses are lockt up by sleep; and hath at that time received very high illuminations from God: which is a sign that, if the body were quite dead, it would not be without them. Aristotle, I find in *Sextus Empiricus**, observes thus much, that in Sleep, when the Soul is by herself, ἀπολαβῶσα τὴν ἰδίαν φύσιν, resuming her own nature, she prophesies and foretells things to come: and declares, saith he, hereby what she shall be ἐν ταῖς κατὰ θάνατον χωρῆσαι τῶν σωματίων, when by death she shall be separated from all bodily things. By which consideration, St. Austin tells us that *Gennadius*, a famous Physician in his time, and very religious and charitable, was wonderfully inlightned, when he was in doubt whether there was any life after death.

* L. viii.
adv. Ma-
themat.
p. 312.

* *Epist.*
100. ad
Euodium.

death. " God, saith he *, would by no
 " means desert a mind so well disposed ;
 " but there appeared one night to him in
 " his sleep a very handsome young man,
 " who bid him follow whether he should
 " lead him. Which he thought he did,
 " till he came to a Citie, where on the
 " right side he was saluted with the sweet-
 " test voices that ever he heard ; which
 " the young man , upon his inquiry
 " what this meant , told him were the
 " hymns of the Blessed and of the Saints.
 " What he saw on the left side, he did
 " not well remember : but awaking he
 " lookt upon this as a dream, and thought
 " no farther of it. Till some time after
 " the same young man appeared again to
 " him , another night ; and askt if he
 " knew him. To which he answering,
 " Yes very well ; he askt him where he
 " had seen him. And *Gennadius* pre-
 " sently related, how by his conduct he
 " was once led to hear the hymns and see
 " the sight before mentioned. Here the
 " young man askt him, whether he saw
 " and heard what he related in his sleep,
 " or waking. In my sleep, said *Genna-*
dinus. True, said the other ; and now
 " thou seest me in thy sleep, dost thou
 " not ? To which he consenting ; his in-
 " structer

" instructor proceeded to ask him, Where
 " is thy body now ? In my bed-chamber,
 " said *Gennadius*. Dost thou know then,
 " replied the young man, that thy eyes
 " are now bound up, and shut, and lie
 " idle in that body, so that with them
 " thou seest nothing ? I know it, said
 " *Gennadius*. What eyes then are these,
 " said his instructor again, wherewith thou
 " seest me ? Here *Gennadius* being silent,
 " not knowing what to say ; the young
 " man laid hold of this occasion to open
 " to him the meaning of all these questi-
 " ons, saying, Those eyes of thy flesh,
 " which is asleep and lies in thy bed,
 " have no imployment and doe nothing
 " at all ; and yet thou hast eyes where-
 " with thou seest me. Just so when thou
 " art dead, and the eyes of thy flesh are
 " put out and can doe nothing, *vita tibi*
 " *inerit, quâ vivas, sensusque, quo sentias,*
 " *there will be life in thee, whereby to live,*
 " *and sense, whereby to perceive.* Beware
 " now hereafter how thou doubtest that
 " *life remains after death.* And thus that
 faithful man told St. *Austin*, the Provi-
 dence and mercy of God quite removed
 his doubt.

But

* Euseb.
Hist. Ec-
cles. L. vi.
c. 37.

Hæres.
lxxv. n. 7.

But I shall not insist on such reasons as these, my intention being onely to shew what we learn from the *Apostles*, the faithfull Witnesses of *Jesus Christ*, to confute that drowzy conceit of the Sleep of the Soul; which like a thistle sprung up first * in the wild deserts of *Arabia*, but ought not to be suffered to grow in the Garden of God. In which this Doctrine of the Apostles, I might shew, hath been so deeply rooted, that to testify the Church's belief of it, was one great end of the Commemorations and Prayers which were made for the faithfull departed this life. So we learn from *Epiphanius* his confutation of *Aerius*, who did not approve of this practice. The very first account he gives of it is, *that those who were present might believe* ἐπι οἱ ἀπελθόντες ζῶσι, &c. *that they who were departed live, and are not gone out of being; but exist and live with the Lord.* And they did not suppose, I may adde, that those whom they remembred in their sacred offices, were frying in the flames of hell, as the present *Roman Church* doth; but in a state of happiness, though imperfect, and some more imperfect then other. This we learn from the Service of the Church

Church in those days, especially at the funeralls of the departed. Whensoever they celebrated the dreadfull mysteries, together with the holy *Martyrs and Confessours and Priests*, whom they commemorated, they prayed for the whole World, for which *Christ's* blood was an expiation: not forgetting those who slept in him, whom the Priest desired those who were present to remember. For we are all one body (saith St. *Chrysostome**, * Hom. in 1 Cor. xiv. p. 524.) though one member be brighter then another: and therefore

they desired all might have *συγγνωμην και παρηγοριαν* pardon and consolation.

Which they hoped they had, it is plain from the *Funerall Office*, which, in great part, was Eucharisticall, consisting of Psalms and Hallelujahs. So the same great person informs us in his Commentaries on the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, where he takes occasion from those words, ii.

15. [*deliver them who through fear of death, &c.*] to reprehend the bitter lamentations and wailings of those who mourned for their dead friends, as altogether inconsistent with what the Church did at their funeralls. Where the bright

lamps* they saw burning proclaimed that * Hom. iv. p. 453 35. they attended them as valiant champions: 454. 10.

H h

and

and the *hymns* that were sung glorified God, and gave him thanks for crowning him that was departed, and for freeing him from his labours, and for delivering him from a state of fear, that he might have him with himself. *Are not the hymns, saith he, for this end? is not this the meaning of the singing Psalms? ταῦτα πᾶν χαίρειν ἔστιν:* and all these things are proper to those that rejoyce: according to that of St. James, *Is any well-pleased? let him sing Psalms.* And a little after he bids them mind what they sung at those solemnities. *Return unto thy rest, O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee:* and, *I will fear no evils, for thou art with me:* and again, *Thou art my refuge from the affliction that compasseth me about.* This was part of the *Funerall-service*, to which he tells them they did not attend, but were drunk with sorrow; or else they would not have made such lamentations. For to say, *Return unto thy rest, O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee,* and yet to weep and lament, is a mockery and a stage-play; not a serious piece of devotion. This and much more that great Man there says, to shew how preposterous it was to mix their lamentations with those

those hymns : which supposed the Souls of the deceased to be in rest and peace, and to partake liberally of the bounteous goodness of God ; and therefore ought to have composed and comforted the minds of the living, who confessed their Friends had made a blessed change of a troublesome life, for one full of quiet and happy repose. To which the *Order of buriall* in our Church, which professes to tread in the steps of the first Ages of Christianity, is very conformable. Where we Sing, *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, &c.* and acknowledge that we ought not to be sorry, *as men without hope, for them that sleep in him : because the Spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord do live with God ; and, being delivered from the burthen of the flesh, are in joy and felicity.* Not compleat indeed, but we pray him (after we have given thanks for *delivering our Brother out of the miseries of this sinfull world*) to hasten his kingdom, that we, with all those that are departed in the true faith of his holy name, may have our **PERFECT CONSUMMATION** and **BLISS** both in **BO-
DY** and **SOUL** in his eternall and everlasting glory.

But it is not my business, as I said, to seek for testimonies to this Truth any lower then from the APOSTLES themselves, who as they preached the glad tidings of *Eternall Life* every-where, so they protest most solemnly, (and they were men, you shall hear, who taught and practised the strictest truth and honesty,) that they had a most *certain* knowledge of it: and therefore we may safely rely upon their testimony. Those words wherewith St. *John* begins his *first* Epistle may serve in stead of all that might be alledged to assert this; ver. 1, 2, 3. where he gives an account of the reason they had to publish to the world that WORD OF LIFE, (*Jesus* and his Gospell,) as they had done a long time. “For they said nothing concerning that *Eternall Life*, which it was in
“the purpose of God the Father from the
“beginning to bestow, and now was
“manifested to them, but what they had
“HEARD; that is, received from his
“own mouth, and been constant Auditors of. Which made them the more
“confident to declare these things to others, because they had them not at the
“second hand, but immediately from
“himself. And

And because it is the least of testimonies to say we have *heard* a thing, therefore he adds, in the second place, that they had *SEEN* it; “ beheld, that is, “ all the marvellous works he did to confirm this Doctrine which he delivered; “ as the word *Seen* seems to be understood “ xv. *Joh. 24. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now they have SEEN, and yet hated both me and my Father.* They *saw* the vast numbers “ that he fed with a little food, the sick “ that he cured with speaking a word, “ the dead that he raised when all their “ friends gave them for lost, and despaired of seeing them again in this world: “ In short, so many instances of his Divine power and authority, that if they “ should have been written every one, “ this Apostle supposes the World would “ not have been able to contain the “ Books that should have been written. xxi. *ult.* But these are recorded which we find in the Gospel, as he concludes the foregoing Chapter, *that we might believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and that believing we might have Life through his Name.*

And lest any should imagine it was but a transient sight they had of these things, and their eyes might be deluded, (as we sometimes are when a thing suddenly flies away from us,) or that they were but seldom spectators of these things, and so could not gather much from thence; he adds, in the *third* place, that they had **LOOKED** on it : that is, “ had this
 “ evidence continually before their eyes.
 “ They scarce saw any thing else but mi-
 “ racles. They had not leisure oftentimes
 “ so much as to eat their meat, by reason
 “ of the great multitude of people that
 “ came to be healed by him. They con-
 “ versed a long time with *Lazarus* after
 “ he was risen; and our Lord himself
 “ was *seen* of them forty days after his
 “ resurrection, speaking of the things per-
 “ taining to the kingdom of God. And
 “ when the Holy Ghost came, they them-
 “ selves, to whom the Apostle here writes,
 “ could testify the wonderfull variety of
 “ spirituall gifts that were poured on be-
 “ lievers.

But because we imagine that to *feel* a thing is far more considerable for our satisfaction then to *see* it or *look* upon it;
 (as

(as *St. Thomas* would not believe those who had seen our Lord and heard him speak, but he would put his hands into his wounds, before he would be satisfied;) therefore the Apostle tells us farther, that they declared nothing but what they had **HANDLED** of the word of life. That is, "there was most palpable evidence and demonstration given of the truth of their report. They were so near as to touch and feel that their eyes were not deceived, when they thought they saw such miracles wrought. For their own hands distributed the bread and the fish to the hungry multitude. And some of them untied the grave-cloaths of *Lazarus* when he was raised from the dead. And (to give one instance for all) when he himself rose again from his grave, they not onely discoursed with him, and saw him eat and drink, and beheld him severall times and in severall places; but he called them to him, and said, *Behold my hands and my feet; handle me and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me have.* xxiv. *Luk.* 39. This very handling of him was a great argument of the *Eternall Life* which was with the Father, but was hereby made

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manifest unto us ; for it proves *his* resurrection, and that is a proof of *ours*.

Now they having thus *heard*, and *seen*, and *beheld*, and *handled* these things, how could they chuse but publish that *Jesus* is the Authour of Eternall Life ? And we receiving such testimony from them, how can we refuse to believe their word, *that we may have fellowship with them in God and his Son ; i. e.* be partakers, as they were, in that most blessed Life of God and our Saviour *Jesus Christ* ?

“ If we do but believe there were such
 “ men as *St. John* and *St. Paul* and all
 “ the rest, and if they had eyes and ears
 “ and hands like other men ; if they
 “ were men of sound brains and under-
 “ standings ; (as it appears by their wri-
 “ tings they were ;) if any credit may
 “ be given to sober persons, who protest
 “ they heard those voices from heaven,
 “ saw those miracles which they have re-
 “ corded, conversed with our Saviour after
 “ he rose from the dead ; (as there are no
 “ Writers in the world deserve credit, if
 “ they do not ;) nay , if they deserve
 “ more credit then any, considering what
 “ they did and suffered, as you shall hear,
 “ for the testimony of that which they
 “ saw

“law and heard, and wrote to the world;
 “there is no doubt this *Life was manife-*
 “*sted* most apparently to them, and they
 “had reason to *bear witness of it*, and
 “*shew it to us* : And we cannot but rest
 “satisfied that it is the will of God *to give*
 “*Eternall Life* by his Son *Jesus Christ*
 “our Lord. No question to be made of
 it, unless we will question all Histories
 in the world, and believe nothing that is
 reported and delivered to us by others.
 Which if it were once resolved, there
 would be an end of most of the trade,
 commerce and business that is managed
 in the world. And deeds and evidences
 which men have from their ancestours
 would become void ; and present posses-
 sion would be the onely title they could
 have to their estates.

But for our farther satisfaction, let me
 briefly shew, that the APOSTLES
 gave a continued Testimony to this truth,
 all the *three* ways whereby St. *John* saith
 He came, by *WATER*, by *BLOOD*,
 and by the *SPIRIT*.

I.

As for the purity of their *Doctrine*, which is one part of the Testimony of *Water*, I have given an account of it in the first part of this Discourse. Which demonstrates it was of that nature, that it had been an idle attempt to preach it, and endeavour to plant it in the World, had they not believed, and been able to prove, that their Master, who employed them, would give them, and all those who obeyed their word, the reward of *Eternall Life*. To which if you adde the holiness of their *Life*, which is another part of this Testimony, you cannot think that men of such sincerity in all other things would have affirmed so confidently as they did that which they did not take to be true; nor have protested they saw and heard and felt such things as they never had any notice of. But if you will needs suppose they might be so vile, (which is very unreasonable;) yet who can think they would have denied themselves so much as they did for their Master's sake, in which a great part of their piety consisted, if they had not been sure that he would lead them by such

such means to everlasting life? This extraordinary contempt of all present things, even of life it self, as you shall hear, plainly shewed they were not merely big words which they spake, of being with God and our Saviour, to see the Glory which the Father had given him; but things which they heartily expected. For does any man find such inclinations in himself, as should make him imagine they would have left their trades, their houses, their possessions, their wives, kindred, friends, all that is desirable in this world, and perswade those who were the dearest to them to doe so too; if they had not had an assurance, upon such grounds as were apt to convince others as well as them, of the recompence they should meet withall hereafter in a better life? Who can believe that *St. Paul* would have quitted all his Dignities, his hopes of greater preferment, his esteem and reputation with the wisest and chiefest persons in the Nation, his ease and quiet, and every thing else, and betaken himself to the troublesome service of a despicable Master; if he had not known and seen it as clearly as the Sun in the firmament, that *Jesus*, whom he served, was raised from the dead, and made the
King

King of Glory, and would prefer all those that proved faithfull to him unto the greatest honour in the heavens? For what reason should those good men live *as having nothing*, and all the time be as chearfull as if *they possessed all things*? Did they not look upon themselves, think you, as heirs of a Kingdom which could not be taken away from them? Reade St. Paul's description of himself to Timothy, (2. iii. 10, 11.) who he says " had
 " fully known *his doctrine and manner of*
 " *life*, (not onely what he had been wont
 " to teach, but how he had followed his
 " own instructions,) what his *purpose* and
 " aim had ever been, his *fidelity*, his *le-*
 " *nity* towards offenders, his *charity* to
 " all Christians, his *patience* under trou-
 " bles of all sorts : for he was *persecuted*
 " and endured great *afflictions* by that
 " means at *Antioch*, (where they thrust
 " him out of the city,) at *Iconium*, (where
 " an assault was made upon him to stone
 " him,) at *Lystra*, (where they actually
 " stoned him.) And in how many other
 " places he had been vilely used, Timothy,
 " he says, could not be ignorant, having
 " been a companion with him in his tra-
 " vels. xvi. *Act*. 3. Now what think you
 of such a person as this? Do you take
 him

him for a dolt and an ignorant sot? Was this great Apostle a mere lump of clay, who was sensible of nothing; and imagined others so senseless, as that he might without any reason propound this example to *Timothy* for his imitation? How came they to be so stupefied, as to chuse rods, and whips, and stones, and all other miseries, when they might have lived in ease and peace? Nay, to glory in these things alone, as if there had been nothing that could have done them such honour, 2 Cor. xii. 5? They did *both hunger and thirst*, (as I noted from the same Apostle in my former Book, 2 Cor. iv. 11.) *they were naked and buffeted, they had no certain dwelling-place, they laboured working with their own hands, being reviled they blessed, being persecuted they suffered it, they were made as the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things.* Which things no body in his wits can think men of their understanding would have endured, if they had not been provided of *meat* which the world knew not of, and been nourished and sustained with the hope of glory, and assured of eternall *mansions* in the heavens, and known that they should inherit a *blessing*, and be made more *honourable and glorious* with
Jesus

Jesus for ever, then the World for the present could make them vile and contemptible.

These things are so clear, that the bare recitall of them is sufficient to satisfy us they were no deceivers, nor men of light belief, who took things upon trust without good evidence; but had the greatest reason to endeavour to baptize all Nations into this belief, as they did by an indefatigable diligence: which was no small testimony of the power and glory of the Lord *Jesus*.

II.

And their BLOOD speaks as much. For as *none of them*, saith St. Paul, xiv. *Rom. 7. lived to himself, so none of them died to himself*; but consecrated even his blood to the Service of *Christ*, if he pleased to command it. Whereby they sealed to this Truth; and shewed they were so far from doubting of immortall Life by the Lord *Jesus*, that they unfeignedly desired to be dissolved and to be with him. Witness St. Stephen, who was stoned because he said he saw the Lord *Jesus* in the highest glory; which he was

NEVER

never more assured of then when he died, for then he recommended his Spirit to him, as our Saviour had done his to God the Father. Witness *Antipas*, a faithfull Martyr. Witness all those Souls whom *St. John* saw beneath the Altar : who had all learnt from our Saviour what they must expect in his Service, when he said, *The Brother shall deliver up the Brother to death, and the Father the Child; and the Children shall rise up against their Parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my Name's sake.* Under which afflictions they had nothing to support them, but that which he immediately adds, *He that endureth to the end shall be saved.* x. *Matth.* 21, 22. These few words were a sufficient encouragement to them, and made them not regard their lives for the sake of *Christ Jesus*; who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. For the which cause, saith *St. Paul*, *I suffer these things, and am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.* 2 *Tim.* i. 10, 12. And for this cause he would not have *Timothy* to be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of him his prisoner;

prisoner ; (ver. 8.) but to imitate him by being partaker of the afflictions of the Gospell ; which he endured, as he adds in the next Chapter ver. 10. *for the elects sake, that they also might obtain the Salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternall glory.* The Apostles nothing doubted that *they themselves* should obtain Salvation and immortall glory this way : and they hoped likewise, by their constant sufferings even to the death, to draw *others also* to the faith, or confirm them in it ; that they might have a share with them in this happiness, and be willing to suffer for it. *For it is a faithfull saying,* he adds, *that if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him : if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him :* ver. 11, 12.

I shall conclude this with that Discourse of St. Paul 1 Cor. xv. 30, 31, 32. where he alledges this among other reasons, to confirm that Church in the belief of the Resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come, that He and the rest of the preachers of Christian Religion would not have been such fools, as to have suffered in that manner they did, had they not seen plain demonstrations

strations of this truth. For they were so miserably treated, that they carried their lives in their hand; and were every hour, for any thing they knew, at the brink of the grave. He for his part had been compelled to encounter with wild beasts on the Theatre at *Ephesus*: (so some ancient Writers understand him, who knew there was nothing more common with the Pagans then to cry, *Christiani ad Leones, Away with the Christians to the Lions*: and it was a punishment to which the vilest Malefactors were subject, particularly Magicians; as we learn from another *Paul* * the Lawyer:) or at least he ran as great hazzards as those men did who were exposed unarmed to the fiercest creatures, such as Lions, Bears, Tigers, Leopards, wild Boars, and Bulls, and Dogs. (To every one of which we have examples of Christians, in the Ecclesiasticall Story, that were condemned.) And it was for no other cause but this, that he preached *Jesus* and the Resurrection. How could they think him so senseless, as to put his life in such danger upon this account, if he was not fully perswaded of that for which he suffered so much; nay, had not good ground to be of this belief? He knew the value of life as well

* L. v de
receptis
sententiis.

as other men. He was no stone nor block, as I have said, that had no feeling of pain. He naturally loved ease and quiet and pleasure, as well as the rest of the world. And his education had not been such as to incline him to believe things carelessly; especially such a thing as this, quite contrary to all his former principles, and as contrary to his present preferments and future hopes. And therefore, without imputing to him the highest degree of folly and stupidity, the *Corinthians* could not disbelieve what he preached of the Life to come. Concerning which he had received such full satisfaction, and was convinced of it by such undeniable arguments; that he chose rather to lose his life, then to deny it, or not to preach it.

III.

And that He and the rest of the *Apostles* were not deceived nor judged amiss in this matter, the mighty power of the SPIRIT, which wrought continually in them and with them, abundantly testified. This was sufficient not onely to satisfy *them*, but to satisfy the rest of the world, that *Jesus*, as they said, was alive, and

and made the Lord of all : who was ready at hand on all occasions to bear witness to this Truth when they preacht it, that he would give *Eternall Life* unto his followers. This power of the SPIRIT going along with them was a thing so notorious, that the Pagans in some places cried out, *the GODS are come down to us in the likeness of men* ; and could scarce be restrained from doing divine honours to them. xiv. *Act.* 11, 18.

And whereas there had been some wonderfull things heretofore done among the *Jews*, if we may believe themselves, they now all ceased ; as if God had transferred all power on earth into the *Apostles* hands. For they tell us, there were

Ten Signs in the House of the Sanctuary*, ** Pirke Avoth cap. v.* which never failed : as, that no woman ever miscarried by the smell of the flesh

that was burnt upon the Altar ; no fly was ever seen in the House ; nor did the flesh of the Sanctuary ever stink ; nor the rain ever extinguish the fire ; nor the greatest winds hinder the smoak from ascending in a straight pillar towards heaven ; &c. But forty years before the Sanctuary was destroyed, all these Miracles ceased ; according to that of the Psalmist, (which they apply to this business*,)

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* *Talmud*
Bab. in
Joma apud
Raimund.
p. 297.

ness*,) *We see not our signs, nor is there any prophet to tell us how long.* lxxiv. 9. When the veil of the Temple was rent in sunder, God, who dwelt in the Holy place, left his habitation, and went out at that breach to return no more thither. All the wonders were now without those doors, in the open streets, in every house, in the whole world. Which was a notable *sign* that *Jesus* was *Christ*, and alive from the dead, by whose power the Apostles professed to doe all their wonderfull works.

By these they proved that he was exalted at God's right hand, and sate, as he said he would, on the throne of his Glory. And their proof was the stronger, because there was no great thing done (as formerly there had) but onely what was wrought by their hands; who reigned now with him as so many Princes, and *sate on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.* xix. *Matth.* 28. xxii. *Luk.* 30. They were supreme Governours (whose office it is to *judge*) in the Church under our Lord *Christ*, it plainly appeared by the mighty power wherewith their Gospell was accompanied. Which came, as *St. Paul* tells the *Thessalonians*, not
in

in word onely, but in power and in the Holy Ghost. That is, in Miraculous works, and in extraordinary gifts, which brought along with them a full assurance: insomuch that he left it to them to tell the world what manner of men they were among them. And if any enquire what was the effect of it, he tells us, that they were perswaded by this miraculous power, to turn from idols, to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

1 Theff. i. 9, 10. This was the fruit of their labours and travels, to convince a number of people, by wonderfull operations upon the sick, nay upon the dead, and by gifts of the Holy Ghost, that Jesus was raised from the dead, and possessed of Eternall life in the heavens; from whence he will come to bestow it upon the faithfull; whom he will never suffer to perish, but rescuing them from destruction, make them ever happy with himself.

And whosoever afterward revolted from this Faith, I may adde, and set themselves to oppose it, the Apostles shewed their power (which was a great witness

to Christianity) as much in their plagues and punishments, as in the cures they wrought upon others. It may well be thought, that those in the *Corinthian Church* who did not believe the Resurrection, were reclaimed from their error by that Letter which *St. Paul* wrote to them; for we hear nothing of it more in the next Epistle. But some there were in other places that obstinately persisted in their folly; and not contented to disbelieve what the Apostles taught in this matter, contradicted and blasphemed it. Two of them are named in the *2 Tim. ii. 17, 18. Hymeneus and Philetus*, who taught that the Resurrection was past, and consequently denied the rewards of the Life to come. The occasion of their erring thus from the faith seems to have been this, that the Apostles often speaking of a spirituall resurrection from a state of sin to the life of godliness, (*Rom. vi. Col. iii.*) which they supposed all Christians had already felt; these men fancied there was no other, affirming the resurrection was past, and none to come. If they had onely doubted of it, the Apostle, it is like, would not have so sharply punished them, no more then he did the *Corinthians*: But they blasphemed, as
he

he expressely tells us of *Hymeneus*, 1 *Tim.* i. 20. that is, reproached this Doctrine as a foolish opinion; and reviled, it is like, the Apostles who were the preachers of it. And therefore he inflicted on them the most grievous punishment, by *delivering them up to Satan*: which was not so little as merely banishing them the Christian Society, but turning them over to the power of the Devill, οὕτως δὲ παραδίδωμι τινὲς σεβλῆντι καὶ μαστιῶντι, as unto a publick Executioner, to torture and scourge them. They are the words of *St. Basil**, with whom agree divers others of the ancient Doctours; who think the Apostle speaks of surrendring such persons into his hands, that he might inflict bodily diseases or pains upon them, to humble and bring them down to submit to the Apostolicall doctrine, when they felt the miraculous effects of their Authority. For that's the reason this punishment is called *delivering up to Satan*; because it visibly appeared by some plagues on the body, that they were fallen under his power, by being thrown out of the Church. He was as a common Gaoler and Executioner in a City or Kingdome; the Apostles as the Magistrates and Governours, (as was said be-

* *Homil.*
in princip.
Proverb.
p. 459.

fore,) sitting upon thrones to judge and pass sentence on men : either by giving the Holy Ghost to those who sincerely believed ; or by delivering those to be tormented and set on the rack by this Evill spirit, who blasphemed the Christian Religion. There was then no other power in the Church to correct and punish them for so high a crime ; and this being done *by the power of our Lord Jesus Christ*, (as you reade *1 Cor. v. 4.*) was a notable testimony of the SPIRIT to the truth of Christianity, and bad all men beware how they spake evill of this holy Doctrine : especially of this fundamentall part of it, that the Lord *Jesus* will give us everlasting life, and raise us up at the last day. The terrible execution which they saw done upon those who subverted this foundation of all piety, was a great means to confirm all Christian people in the faith : and to make them reverence those who had this mighty power, either to give men ease, or to torment them ; to restore men to life, or to strike them dead ; to give them, as was said before, the gifts of the Holy Ghost, or to put them into the possession of the Devill.

There

There is a great deal of difference, it is observed by *Tertullian**, between an *Angel of Satan* sent to buffet a man; and being delivered up, or put into the possession of *Satan* himself. To the former *St. Paul* himself was, by the Divine permission, obnoxious for his exercise. 2 *Cor.* xii. 7. The latter was the punishment of blasphemers, and other horrid offenders, for their cure. But both served to give a testimony to our Saviour, and to settle the hope of immortall Life. For by the *Angel of Satan* which buffeted, that is, disgraced and vexed *St. Paul*, a great many ancient Writers* understand those troubles and sore afflictions, all sorts of injuries and reproaches which infidels and wicked men, by the instinct of some of the Devil's agents, tormented the Apostle withall. *Alexander the Coppersmith*, (saith *St. Chrysostom*,) who did *St. Paul* so much mischief, *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, all those that set themselves against the Gospel, cast him into prison, beat him, drove him out of their cities, were Ministers of Satan, ἐπειδὴ τὰ τῷ Σατανᾷ ἐπετέλεον, because they did Satan's business: who by such instruments laboured all he could to dishearten the Apostles, and hinder the free course

* *L. de Pudicitia*, c. xiii.

St. Chrysostom. Theodoret. Photius apud Occumen. Ambros. Theophylact.

course of the Gospell. Here now appeared the mighty power of *Christ*, which *rested*, as the Apostle speaks, or *took up its dwelling* in them. 2 Cor. xii. 9. They were never so strong as when they were thus afflicted. Then they mightily prevailed, and advanced the Kingdom of *Christ*, by whose powerfull grace they endured all hardships and distresses courageously : and demonstrated they had a strong and immovable hope of being with him in that blessed place, unto which St. *Paul* was rapt just before this *Messenger of Satan*, as we render it, raised such a terrible storm of persecution against him. By that glorious sight he was fortified against it ; and, standing as firm as a rock himself, confirmed others in that faith, which made him so invincible, that he *gloried* and *took pleasure* in all those *infirmities, and reproaches, and necessities, and persecutions, and distresses*, which that Angel of Satan stirred up against him : ver. 9, 10. That was all the Devill got by his ill usage of him, which onely gave the Apostle matter of glory. For when our Saviour pleased not to grant his desire of having this Angel removed, but onely told him *his grace should be sufficient for him* ; immediately he adds, that

that he would gladly glory more then ever in his afflictions. Which plainly shews, both what he meant by that *Angel of Satan*; and how much hereby the Christian Religion was promoted, and the Souls of believers strengthened in the faith. They might easily believe he had been in the *third heavens*, when they saw him so much superiour to all the power on earth, and the powers of the air too; who conspired to beat him down and oppress him. All the art in the world could not so declare the ἀρρητα ῥήματα the unutterable words St. Paul heard, (which the impious *Cainites* and *Gnosticks* *, in a Book of theirs called Ἀναβατικόν, concerning St. Paul's ascent, pretended to relate,) as this inexpressible power of *Christ* residing in him, and supporting him under the greatest miseries; which declared those words remained still imprinted in his Mind.

*Epiphan.
Heres.
xxxviii.

And that other power of *Christ*, whereby the Apostle delivered up high offenders to Satan, (that he might inflict plagues and diseases or aches and pains on their bodies,) as evidently shewed what a great Minister he was in *Christ's* Kingdom; and how credible the Doctrine

was

was which he preached to them. For he
 was ready to revenge all disobedience
 with remarkable punishments ; and al-
 ludes this power as a proof of his autho-
 rity, in the next Chapter, 2 Cor. xiii. 2,
 3, 4. *If I come again, I will not spare, since
 you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me.*
 “ He is not weak indeed towards you, but
 “ *is mighty in you :* (having given by me
 “ exceeding great demonstrations of his
 “ power and my Apostleship, xii. 12.)
 “ Yet since you are not convinced, it
 “ seems, by what you have seen already,
 “ and desire a farther proof that *Christ*
 “ speaks in me, you shall have it ; *I will*
 “ *not spare you ;* that is, I will punish you,
 “ and make you know it to your cost.
 “ *For though Christ was crucified through*
 “ *weakness,* (*i. e.* according to his mor-
 “ tall condition which he assumed for
 “ our sake,) *yet he lives by the power of*
 “ *God,* which raised him from the dead,
 “ and gave him all power in heaven and
 “ earth. You ought not therefore to
 “ condemn one because he is weak, *i. e.*
 “ afflicted, as you are apt to do me ; for
 “ *Christ* went this way to glory : and
 “ *though we also are weak in, or with, him,*
 “ *i. e.* suffer for his sake, which is no
 “ more then he did ; *we shall live with*
 “ *him*

“him by the power of God toward you ;
“that is, make you feel, that as he is a-
“live, (*i. e.* mighty and strong now that
“he is raised from the dead,) so are we
“also by the power of God, which we
“shall make use of for chastising your in-
“solence. Which plainly shews, that
these Apostolicall censures had most mighty
effects ; which demonstrated *Christ*
was alive, and wrought most powerfully
in these his Ministers. By whom as he
gave miraculous gifts, so he miraculously
punished offenders; and never more ter-
ribly then when they were in such a
weak (that is, afflicted) condition, that
it tempted some people to contemn them.
Then they shew’d their power, and made
it appear that, as *he, who was crucified, li-
ved* ; so did they, who were persecuted
and despised : being armed with *divine
weapons* or engines, which were mighty
through God to batter down the stron-
gest holds ; subverting the pitifull rea-
sonings of such as *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*,
and making every proud conceit stoop,
which advanced it self against the Chri-
stian Doctrine. 2 *Cor.* x. 4, 5. This they
did by the power I am speaking of, which
baffled all opposers, and made them
crouch as so many captives to these Mini-
sters

* *Vid. S.*
Chryso-
stom. in
loc.

sters of *Jesus Christ*. Who in their external condition were mean, and exposed to the scorn and contempt of all the world; but so mighty and great by this authority, that the Apostle saith, (ver.8.) it had not been vanity, if he had boasted of it more then he did. For this Apostolicall *Rod*, as he calls it *1 Cor. iv. 21* *, was like the *rod of God* in the hand of *Moses*. It did miraculous things by inflicting terrible punishments, for which no cause but his heavy censure appeared, on those who contradicted and blasphemed: and was as sensible a sign of the presence of God in the Church, as the things which the rod of *Moses* did were of his presence with the ancient *Israelites*. Great fear came upon the whole Church, and upon as many as heard these things, says *St. Luke*, (*Act. v. 11.*) when he relates how the other great Apostle by this rod struck *Ananias* and *Sapphira* dead.

Encom. 1
is xpoys.
Amstel.

For “ hereby they learnt *two* things,
 “ saith *Asterius*: both that our Saviour
 “ was God; and that the teacher of his
 “ laws had Angels attending on him, who
 “ were ready to execute his pleasure. He
 “ would have the lame man walk, and
 “ presently that grace came. He thought
 “ good

“good to punish these sacrilegious per-
 “sons, and the punishment in an instant
 “was inflicted. These things were suffi-
 “cient to astonish the most stony hearts;
 “and to perswade them firmly *ὡς ἐκ ἀπεί-*
 “*της ὡς τὰ ψήματα*, that they were not
 “words of deceit which the Apostle
 “spake, but that God was certainly with
 “him, and that the mystery which he
 “preached was true and holy.

O the wonderfull power of our Lord
Christ, to whom all things in heaven and
 in earth and under the earth do bow and
 obey! whose Ministers had so large an
 Authority, that Angels were ready to
 wait upon their word! Great is his
 power, which by such weak instruments
 brought such mighty things to pass. *His*
Apostles, say the Gentiles, were men of no
account, mean fishermen and such like ru-
stick people. True; and we adde more-
over, that they were unlearned, illiterate,
poor, vile, ignorant and despicable. But
this is no disparagement to them; it is
their glory and peculiar praise, that such
men as these appeared more illustrious then
the whole World. For these idiots, these
rusticks, these illiterate men, were too hard
for the wise, and overcame the mighty, and
 per-

S. Chry-
 sost. Hom.
 iii. in 1 Co-
 rinth.

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perswaded the rich and great to submit to their authority. Great therefore was the power of the Cross ; for these things were not done by any humane strength. Consider a little. A fisher-man, a tent-maker, a publican, an obscure illiterate man coming from Palestine, a far distant country, encounter with the Philosophers at their own doors, with the Rhetoricians, with the ablest speakers, and in a short time put them all down: though infinite dangers opposed them, and nature fought against them, and length of time and old customes mightily resisted them, and Demons also armed themselves, and the Devil mustered up his forces, and moved all things ; Kings, Rulers, People, Nations, Cities, Barbarians, Grecians, Philosophers, Rhetoricians, Sophisters, Oratours, Laws, Judgment-seats, all manner of Punishments, a thousand sorts of deaths. But all these were no more able to stand before the breath of these poor Fishermen, then the small Dust before the blast of powerfull Winds.

How came it about that the weak thus overcame the strong? that twelve naked men not onely encountred, but vanquisht those that were so well armed? If you should see twelve men unskilled in warlike affairs,
and

and not onely unarmed, but weak in body, attack an infinite host of well-disciplin'd and well-appointed souldiers, and, receiving a thousand darts, should not be wounded, nor have any harm, but should take some of their opposers prisoners, and kill others, and disperse all; would any one think this was done by humane means? And yet the trophee's of the Apostles are far more admirable. For it is not so strange for a naked man not to be wounded, as for an obscure, an illiterate person, a fisher-man, to baffle so much wit and eloquence: and not to be hindred in their preaching, neither by their own small number and poverty, nor by the dangers they met withall, nor by the prepossession of custome, nor by the austerity of the things they commanded, nor by daily deaths, nor by the multitude of those that were in errour, nor by the dignity of those that mis-led them.

Who would not admire that mouth of St. Paul by which Christ was preached; and a light broke forth more amazing then lightning, and a voice more terrible, even to Devils, then any clap of thunder? This voice brought them bound like slaves, this purged the world, this cured diseases, and threw out wickedness, and introduced the

Id. Ho-
mil. ult.
in Ep. ad
Roman.

truth. What good was there which was not done by that mouth of his? It drove away devils, it unloosed sins, it stopt the mouth of tyrants, it silenced the tongues of Philosophers, it brought the world near to God, it perswaded Barbarians to Christian wisdom, it set all things in order on earth, and had a power also in heaven; binding whom it would, and loosing there, according to the power given him. As a lion let loose among a company of foxes, so did he fall upon the societies of Demons and Philosophers: and like a thunderbolt struck through all the armies of the Devill; who was so afraid of him, that he trembled at his shadow, and ran away if he did but hear his voice. He delivered the incestuous Corinthian to him, being far distant from the place; and again he snatcht him out of his bands, being perfectly acquainted with his devices. And in like manner he taught others by the same severity, not to blaspheme.

But let us not content our selves merely to admire him; let us not onely be astonished at him: let us imitate and follow him. What though we cannot doe such miracles as the Apostles did? and there is no hunger and other miseries to be endured?
(the

(the times being peaceable and quiet, God be blessed :) yet there is their piety and the holiness of their life to be transcribed, which was no less admirable. And this is the noblest conflict; this is the syllogism which cannot be contradicted; this by our Works. Should we discourse never so excellently, but live no better then others; we gain nothing. For unbelievers do not mind what we say, but what we doe; saying, Do thou first of all follow thine own words, and then perswade others. For if thou tellest us of millions of good things in the other world, but art so intent upon the things of this, as if there were no other; we believe thy works rather then thy words. For when we see thee greedy to snatch other mens goods, bitterly bewailing thy friends deceased, and in many other things offending, how shall we believe thee that there is a Resurrection? Thus unbelievers are hindered from being Christians.

And therefore having seen how glorious our Saviour is, being instructed in his Religion, and made partakers of so great a gift, let us lead a life agreeable to our principles; that so we may injoy those good things which Christ hath promised. For He there-
Id. Homil. xii. in Joh. han.

fore appeared, not onely that his Disciples might behold his glory in this world, as they say they did, (i. Joh. 14.) but also in the world to come : For, I will, saith he, that where I am, they may be, and see my glory. And if he appeared so illustriously here, what shall we say of his glory there ? O happy, thrice happy they, more happy then can be expressed, who shall be thought worthy of that glory ! Which if we should be so unhappy as not to see, better had it been for us, if we never had been born. To what purpose do we live and breath ; what are we, if we miss of that Light ? if we may not be permitted then to see our Lord and Master ? If those who enjoy not the light of the Sun, lead a life more bitter then death ; how miserable will their condition be who are deprived of that light ? This loss will be punishment sufficient : though this is not all they must expect. For being banished from this Light, they shall not onely be cast into outer darkness ; but there burn perpetually, and miserably consume, and gnash their teeth, and suffer a thousand other miseries.

Let us awake therefore, let us look about us, let us use our utmost endeavours, that we may enjoy the happiness Christ designs
for

for us; and be far remote from the river of fire, which runs with great noise before the dreadful tribunall. Into that if we fall, there is no redemption. And therefore let us purify our life, let us make it bright and shining; so that we may have boldness of access to the blessed sight of our Lord, and obtain the promised good things, through the grace and loving-kindness of Christ Jesus; by whom and with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory world without end. Amen.

Kk 3 C H A P.

1944-1945

C H A P. XIII.

The Use we are to make of this
R E C O R D.

I.

AND in the very entrance of so pious a design, to improve the great grace which Heaven hath bestowed on us, it becomes us to stand amazed at the transcendent love of God our Saviour : who not contenting himself to have thoughts and intentions of good towards such wretched Sinners, hath been pleased to make us a gracious promise that he will bless us ; and to acquaint us, by no less Messenger than his own Eternall Son appearing from heaven in our flesh, with the secret purposes of his heart to give us the greatest Blessedness. There is nothing so astonishing as this ; whether we consider the incomparable excellency of the Good he designs us, or the favour he hath done us in revealing it to us, or the glory of that person by whom he reveals it, or the certainty we have that this is a

true report, *that God hath given to us Eternall Life, and this Life is in his Son.*

O most joyfull news! shall we poor mortalls live for ever? and live there where *Jesus* is? May such as we presume to expect such glory, honour and immortality, as he hath brought to light by his Gospel? O wonderfull love! which might have concealed its kindness, and yet eternally obliged us. It had been enough, if we had got to heaven, without knowing before-hand we should be so happy. Why should such offenders enjoy the comfort of hoping for so great a Happiness, while we are here in these earthly prisons? Might we not have been well contented, to creep upon our hands and knees to so high a glory? Had we not been fairly used, if with our heads hanging down, and not daring so much as to lift up our eyes to that holy place, we had travelled through this world, and at last found our selves, beyond all expectation, at rest with *Jesus*? But, O the love of God, which hath bid us hold up our heads, and look above, and behold our Lord in his glory, and hope well, yea be confident, that he *hath seated us together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus!*

Jesus ! We are indebted to him beyond all thoughts, for promising us so freely, out of his exceeding great love, and giving us so evident a right to such glory and honour, as our own unworthiness and guilt forbid us to promise our selves, or to have the least expectance of.

And what is it that he hath so freely promised ? To look into that high and holy place where he is ? at some distance to behold his glory ? to have an Angel come sometimes to visit us, and bring us some message from him in some of the suburbs of heaven ? And a great favour too, I assure you. A very singular kindness it ought to be esteemed, if we vile wretches may be permitted to be so happy, as but to come near the gates of the celestiaall palace. Well would it be for us, to come but within the sound of those melodious hymns which the heavenly host continually sing : or to live but in some of the most remote corners of that heavenly countrey ; and there enjoy, for many Ages, the sweet society of some good Friends, in pure love and innocent conversation. But hark ; He tells us we shall live with him, and see his Glory, and be with his Son *Jesus*, and reign

reign together with him in his heavenly Kingdom, and be equall to the Angels, and enter into the joy of our Lord, and continue with him for ever. *What manner of love is this, that we should be called the Sons of God ; and being like him, behold him as he is !* Where is our love ? whither is it run ? after what is it wandered, if it be not here ready to acknowledge this kindness, in making us such great, such exceeding great and precious promises ? Ah me ! that we should have lost our selves so much, as not to find our affections forward to meet such a love as this, with the highest transport of joy ! When our hearts so abound with love, that we have enough for every thing in the world ; when there is not a pretty bird or a dog but we have some to spare for it ; have we none at all for our Lord God, for LOVE it self, for *that* Love which hath *so* loved us ?

Ah blessed *Jesus* ! that thou shouldst be pleased to doe so much for those, whose hearts thou knewest to be so cold, that they would scarce be warmed with the brightest beams of thine inconceivable love ! How shall we excuse our selves to thee, that our Souls are still so frozen,
after

after thou, *the Sun of righteousness*, hast shone so long so powerfully upon us ?

Let us consider, are we fed with a mere fancy ? do we live onely in a pleasing dream ? or are we left in doubt of the truth of these things, and hang in such suspence, that we know not what to think of them ? No such matter neither. He hath compleated his kindness, by giving us a *Certainty* and full assurance of those things which are revealed to us in his Gospel. Here are WITNESSES of the highest quality to attest the truth of his Love : by whom *we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true, &c. This is the true God, and Eternall Life.* And as if one or two were not sufficient, here are six Witnesses come to tell us how he loves us. Heaven and Earth conspire to draw our hearts to the love of him ; who hath not onely given us exceeding great *Promises*, but exceeding great *Certainty* that they are all true and faithfull. He knew very well they would seem incredible ; being as much beyond all our thoughts, as they are beyond our deserts. And therefore he took care to give us such evidences of their

their truth, as should not merely work in us belief, but a full assurance of faith. By *Himself*, by his *Word*, by the *Holy Ghost*, by the *Water*, the *Bloud*, and the *Spirit*, we are so many ways rooted and grounded in this perswasion, that we cannot but see we are doubly beholden to his infinite bounty : first, for such exceeding great and precious promises ; and then, for as wonderfully great confirmation of them, to our unspeakable and endless comfort.

And are we not yet apprehensive of his love? Doth it not yet feelingly touch our hearts ; but leave us indifferent whether we will love him or not? Ah fools that we are ! who must be sent to school to those brute creatures mentioned before, to teach us better nature and better manners. How do our very dogs (as I have said elsewhere) follow us and fawn upon us for a crust of bread ? how close do they keep to us ? how ready are they to defend us and our houses, and all belonging to us ? Even when we are dead, some of them have been known not to forsake their Masters for any other. And what is all this service for, but such things as we have no use of, or make no account

account of our selves? O blessed God! who can endure to stay so long as to hear this applied to himself, before he learn to love thee? I see whither this lesson tends: I behold already how shamefull it is to dispose of my heart away from thee. Thou hast given us thine own dear Son: What a gift! how great a boon! Thou hast promised us eternall life: How invaluable a possession! Thou hast given us good hopes and strong consolation: What an excessive kindness! Shall we not devote our selves to thee? shall we not forsake all, and follow thee, whithersoever thou wilt lead us? We cannot refuse: we must resolve to surrender our hearts intirely to thee. We should be worse then Dogs, should we not with all our minds and soul and strength love that transcendent goodness, which by the most miraculous demonstrations hath perswaded us, that we shall live eternally with himself, and enjoy the everlasting fruits of his infinite love. This is the most comfortable news that could possibly arrive from heaven. Should we have had our own wishes, nothing greater, nothing so great could have entred into our hearts desire. This sweetens the bitterness of all afflictions, and this heightens
all

all our joys ; when we hope the one shall shortly, but the other shall never end.

Plutarch deservedly blamed *Epicurus* of great incogitancy, who, making all happiness consist in Pleasure, denied the state of the future life : which it is the greatest pleasure to hope for and expect. Nothing casts such a damp upon all a man's enjoyments here, as the cold thoughts of an endless death seizing on his heart. He cannot but sigh to think that shortly there must be a finall period put to all his delights. As on the contrary, this gives life and spirit to them, if he can think they shall be improved and perpetuated for ever. And therefore how much do we owe to the love of God, who hath given us assurance even of the Resurrection of our body to an immortall life ; and told us, it shall be so far from being lost by going to the grave, that, like Seed, it shall rise again quite another thing then it was when cast into the ground ? no longer weak, contemptible, corruptible and mortall ; but powerfull, spirituall, glorious, incorruptible and immortall : and consequently capable of purer, more spritely, and more lasting

lasting pleasures then now it injoys.

“ O how much more *comfortable* is this
 “ opinion, then that of the *Epicurean*,
 “ (as *Tertullian* excellently speaks *,) * De Te-
 “ which vindicates thee from destruction ! *simonio*
 “ How much more *seemly* then the *Py-* *anima c.*
 “ *thagorean*, which doth not send thee *iv.*
 “ into beasts ! How much more *full*
 “ then the *Platonicall*, which restores e-
 “ ven thy body as a new dowry to thee !
 “ O tast and see how gracious the Lord
 “ is. *Bonum Deum novimus ; solum opti-*
 “ *imum à Christo ejus addiscimus ** : We * Id. De
 “ knew God was good before ; but so most ex- *Resurrexi-*
 “ cellently good, we learn onely from his *one carnis*
 “ Christ ; who bidding us , next him , to *cap. ix.*
 “ love our Neighbour , doth that himself
 “ which he expects from us. He loves even our
 “ body, which is so many ways of kin to him.

II.

But that we may understand how much
 we are indebted to him, and thereby be-
 come more sensible of his wonderfull
 Love, give me leave to shew, as briefly
 as I can, how little the world knew, be-
 fore our Saviour came, of this Happiness
 which he hath revealed to us : and how
 much

much his loving-kindness hath abounded towards us more then to his more peculiar people in former days; whose love notwithstanding he expected should be intirely devoted to him and his service.

It would be very easy to shew, were there not danger of making this Treatise too big, how weak all the reasonings of the Philosophers were about this matter; and in what uncertainty they left men after they had written whole Books on this Subject. Among all those who endeavoured by humane argumentations to find it, "there were but few (as St. Augustine truly observes *)) that could, "and they but scarcely, arrive at the "knowledge of the immortality of the "Soul; though men of great wit, and "abounding with leisure, and instructed "in the most subtile pieces of learning. "And when they had resolved, says he, "that it was immortall, they could not "find a settled blessed life for it. But many of them thought it returned again to "the miseries of this life. And they "who blusht at this, and placed the Soul "in immortall blessedness without the "body, destroyed their own opinion by
the

* L. xii.
De Trinitate.
sc c. 8. & 9.

“the revolution which they fancied of all things back again, after a certain period of time, to that condition wherein they were before : As he shews more fully in his Book of the City of God *. There is nothing truer then that of St. Paul, ii. Eph. 12. that they *had no hope, viz.* of the Resurrection and eternall Life. For, to say nothing of the Resurrection, (to which they were perfect strangers,) some of the greatest Philosophers denied the immortality of the Soul. Socrates himself, the very best of them, was not confident of it ; but left it in doubt as a thing uncertain. Nor was Aristotle more assured ; no nor Tully and Seneca : who could not by all their reasonings attain a sure and well-grounded hope of it ; but were forced to confess, after all their disquisitions about the Soul, that, τῶν χαλεποτάτων ὅτι λαβεῖν τινα πῶς περὶ αὐτῆς *, it is one of the most difficult things in the world to receive any belief or certain knowledge about it. All that they said was conjecture, and very weak, very uncertain, and sometimes very extravagant. Which shews in what a mist they were, without the light of Divine revelation, which we by God’s great grace enjoy.

* Lib. xii.
cap. 20.

* Aristotle
de Anima
c. 1.

* in *Phaedo*.

* p. 85.

They themselves seem to be sensible sometimes of the want of an heavenly Guide, to conduct them with more certainty to the knowledge of that happiness which they desired ; as any one may see in *Plato's Dialogue* * on this Subject. Where *Socrates* his arguments for immortality, just before he was going to die, have so little force to conclude any thing certainly ; that *Simias* had reason to say, it is either ἀδύνατον, ἢ παγχάλεπόν τι, impossible, or a thing extream difficult, to know any thing clearly of it in this life. “ But a man must chuse the “ best reasons he can find, which are “ least liable to exception ; and he must “ venture to embark himself in these, and “ sail by them through this life : unless he “ can be so happy as to be carried faster “ and with less hazzard ἐπὶ βεβαιότητι “ ὀχήματι, ἢ λόγῳ θεῷ τινός *, in a surer stedfast chariot, of some divine word, that is, or revelation. Which is a plain acknowledgement that this onely can give us perfect security, and satisfy us so as to take away all doubt. And this God hath granted to us Christians, to whom he hath spoken in these last days by his Son, and given this Record of him, that
Eter-

Eternall Life is in him. And therefore

Lactantius might truly say *, "*Immorta-*

les esse animas Pherecydes & Plato dis-

putaverunt ; hæc verò propria est in no-

stra Religione doctrina. Pherecydes and

Plato disputed that Souls were immor-

tall ; but it is our Religion onely that

teaches this as its proper lesson. For

to know what is true is in no man's

power, but his that is taught of God. And

their arguments, he shews in the next

Chapter, were so weak, and so much

there was to be said with equall proba-

bility on the other side, that *Tully*, after

all things weighed on both parts, con-

cluded he knew not what to say but this,

Harum igitur sententiarum, quæ vera sit,

Deus aliquis viderit ; Which of these opini-

ons therefore are true, God onely knows.

And in another place, *Both these opinions*

have learned Authours ; but which is cer-

tain, cannot be divined. In the next

Chapter also but one he brings ano-

ther such uncertain resolution of the

same great man ; who says, *We should go*

confidently to death, in which we know

there is either the greatest good, or no

evill.

* L. vii.
Divin In-
stit. c. 7.

But what this *Summum bonum* greatest good was, they were still to seek. When they had supposed their Souls to survive their bodies, they had no certain knowledge what the happiness of their future state should be ; but miserably wandered in the darkness of their imaginations, as their severall fancies led them. We need onely take the fairest descriptions they have left us of the εὐσεβῶν χώρα, country of the pious, to satisfy us how little men could know, when they had onely their own thoughts to direct them, of the state of the other World. *Gobryas*, in a Dialogue ascribed to *Plato* *, says, “ that it is a region where the seasons
 “ of the year abound with all manner
 “ of fruit, the fountains gush out with
 “ the purest water, the fields are cloathed
 “ with all kind of flowers, and where
 “ there are Schools of Philosophers, The-
 “ atres of Poets, Musick and Dancing-
 “ schools in perfection ; together with
 “ the neatest Banquets, all sorts of Dain-
 “ ties springing up of themselves, a sweet
 “ easy life without any mixture of sorrow
 “ or grief : for neither the winter nor
 “ summer are there in excess, but a well-
 “ tempered air illustrated by the softest
 “ beams

* in *Axi-
 cho*, p. 371.
*edit. Ser-
 ran.*

“beams of the Sun : and there they that
 “are initiated in the Mysteries have the
 “preeminence, and rightly perform the ho-
 “ly offices. Which is not much different
 from the Paradise which the disciples of
Mahomet expect ; who cannot raise their
 minds higher then the things they best
 fancy in this World. Which makes them,
 being forbidden by their Law the drin-
 king of wine here, to reckon this among
 the pleasures of the other world, that
 they shall have liberty there to drink as
 much as ever they will, and be in no
 danger of intoxication. For the wine of
 Paradise, the *Alcoran* * says, doth not
 make men drunk, as ours doth ; but pas-
 ses away all by sweat, which smells as
 sweet as any Musk.

* *Miscell.*
D. Pocock.
c. vii. p.
300.

Which I mention for no other end,
 but to shew how stupidly blind men are,
 when they are left to walk in the ways
 of their own hearts : and how deeply we
 are indebted to the exceeding great love
 of God ; who, when he saw the minds
 of men too weak to comprehend such
 things, and that they stood in need of a
 Divine Teacher, (as *Clemens Alexandri-*
nus * speaks,) was pleased, in his infinite
 condescension, to send one from the very

* *L. v.*
Stromar.
p. 548.

place, his own dear Son from heaven, *τῆς ἀγαθῆς κλήσεως διδάσκαλός τε καὶ χορηγός*, both the Teacher and the Giver of that possession of Good; the secret holy token of that great Providence, which took care, when men had lost themselves in vain imaginations, to lead them right by Him, who is *the Way, the Truth, and the Life*. Who hath made that certain, which was dubious; and that plain to every body, which was the hardest thing in the world to know before: and bids us lift up our Minds to God himself, with whom he dwells, and to whom he will bring us; that we may rejoyce in his Love for ever, in the happy company of Angels and good men, and in that place of which the Divine Majesty is the glory.

And it was but needfull, we shall see, he should send us such a Conductour; when we consider how little even they who were instructed by God himself understood of this Eternall Life, before our Saviour appeared.

It cannot be denied that the greatest part of the *Jews*, before our Saviour's coming, did expect the Resurrection of the dead, and Eternall Life. v. *Joh. 39.*

xxvi. *Act.* 6, 7. And their pious Ancestors before the giving of the Law, (xi. *Heb.* 9, 10, 16, 26.) as well as after, (ver. 35.) sought an *heavenly country*, and had respect to the *recompence of reward*, and refused deliverance from their tortures, that they might obtain a *better resurrection*. And their Writers in all Ages have spoken much of the *World to come*; whereby they understand sometimes the days of the *Messiah*, and sometimes the future State which we expect after death. All this is true ; but it is as certain,

I. That they had no such express promises of these things, either in the *Law* or in the *Prophets*, as we have in the holy Gospell. Where do you reade one such saying as this (which *we* frequently meet withall) in the whole *Law* of *Moses*; *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am the living bread, which came down from heaven : if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever : and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world?* vi. *Joh.* 47, 51. Promises indeed of the good things of this world are very rife, to those that diligently keep God's commandments ; to

whom he says, *I will give you the rain of your land in due season, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil. And I will send grasse in thy fields for thy cattel, that thou mayest eat and be full.* xi. *Dent.* 14, 15. Which is repeated again more largely, xxviii. *Dent.* 2, 3, &c. *And all these blessings shall come upon thee and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shalt thou be in the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, &c. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out.* But in what place do you find any such promises as these: **B L E S S E D** are the poor in Spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven: Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted: Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall SEE GOD: Blessed are they that doe his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life: with such like? of which the New Testament is so full, that a little time will not serve to number them all. y. *Matt.* 3, 4, 8. xxii. *Rev.* 14.

Alas !

Alas ! when their Writers undertake to prove the life of the World to come out of their *Lam*, it is out of places so far from the purpose, that this endeavour is a plain confession they have no express promises of it, but are fain to squeez the words to speak that which is not in them. Shall I give a few instances of this truth ? *Joseph Albo*, a famous man of that Nation, and of good reason, from that place, xiv. *Dent. 1, 2. Ye are the children of the Lord your God ; ye shall not cut your selves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead : For thou art an holy people, &c.* thus fetches about his discourse. “ Be-
“ hold, one would think the quite con-
“ trary should be concluded. They
“ should the rather mourn and grieve, be-
“ cause they are the children of God :
“ as the Son of a King is more to be la-
“ mented when he is dead, then the
“ child of an ordinary man. But the true
“ interpretation is, as if he had said, See-
“ ing the most Blessed God is holy, and
“ his Ministers are holy ; thou also art
“ an holy people. All things are joyned
“ to that which is like themselves : and
“ therefore without doubt your Soul is
“ joyned to the Angels, because it is ho-
“ ly

"ly as they are holy : for which cause
 "you must not cut your selves for the
 "dead, nor mourn more then is fit. And
 "this teaches us, *that there is a blessed*
 "*immortality for the Soul after death.* Such
 is his conclusion from those words:
 which rather teach us, how hard it is to
 find any thing in the *Law* to that purpose;
 and how much we are bound to magnify
 the love of God for the revelation of his
 blessed will in the Gospel. He argues
 something better when he gathers it from
 those words, xxxii. *Deut.* 47. where he
 saith there is a twofold happiness or re-
 ward spoken of ; one spirituall, [*it is*
your life,] the other corporall, because it
 is said, *through this ye shall prolong your*
days. And yet, so weak and infirm are
 their reasonings that , at another turn
 they shall prove *Eternall Life* from this
 promise of *prolonging their days*; though
 it be expresly added, *in the land which*
the Lord thy God giveth thee. For there
 being the letter *Jod* wanting in the word
 אֲרָוֶה in the *Fifth Commandment*, where
 God promises to prolong their days, they
 conclude that *there is no prolongation of*
days in this world, but it belongs to the
 next. Nor can he find any clearer place
 to prove the Resurrection of the body,
 then

then that in the same book, xxxii. *Dent.* 39. *I kill, and I make alive.* Nay, our Lord himself alledges a place for it, which was but dark till he illustrated it, and proved, by consequence, not an expresse promise, that *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob* should be rewarded by him who called himself their God.

But we cannot, I think, learn this truth better from any than from *Philo*, a man much excelling all the modern *Jews*; who could find no places to this purpose plainer than those cited by *Albo*; some of which he alledges, and adds others * no less weak and obscure. Such as that *iv. Dent. 4. But ye that did cleave unto the Lord, are alive every one of you this day.* They that were good, says he, *Moses* onely acknowledges for the living; and he witnesses to them immortality, by adding, ye are alive *ἐν τῇ σήμερῃ* this day. For this *to day* is the *ἀπείρονος καὶ ἀδιέξιντος αἰὼν*, world without end. If he could have met with any plain promises, who can think that a man of his parts would have used such fancifull proofs as this? And yet this place I find *R. Gamaliel* most relied on, when after a long dispute with the *Sadducees*, who would

* in his Book Περὶ αὐτοῦ.

not

* Manasseh
ben Israel
L. i. de
Resur. c. I.

not be satisfied that the Resurrection could be proved out of the *Law*, he at last referred them hither *. But he explained the words thus, *As ye are all alive to day, so you shall live also in the world to come.* For he supposes some of those whom *Moses* speaks of were dead, and yet the text says they *were alive*; because their union with God, by cleaving to him, made them immortall. Which is not much better then the next proof which follows in *Philo*, who fancies that in x. *Lev.* 2. where it is said, *Nadab and Abihu died before the Lord*, τὰ σύμβολα τῆς ἀθανασίας ἄδεται, “the tokens of their immortality is proclaimed. And that to say, they died *before the Lord*, is as good as to say, *they lived*; for it was not lawfull to bring a dead thing into the presence of God. And this, says he, is that which the Lord presently adds, *I will be sanctified of those who draw nigh to me*: for the dead, as it is in the Psalms, praise not God; ζώντων τὸ ἔργον, it is the work of the living. Just thus he proves in another Book *, with the like force, that *Abel* lives τὴν ἐν Θεῷ ζωὴν ὠδαιμονα an happy life in God, because the Scripture saith the voice of his blood cried out against his wicked

* Περὶ τοῦ
χρῆ-
στος, &c.
p. 164.

wicked Brother. Now πῶς ὁ μὴκέρων
 διαλέγεσθαι δυνατός; how could he be
 able to speak, if he was not in being?
 An argument which rather proves, *Moses*
 spake nothing clearly of these things; for
 if he had, this Writer would not have
 contented himself with such slender infe-
 rences. Which are as weak as that of
R. Johanan, who proves the Resurrection
 from that in xviii. *Num.* 28. where they
 are commanded to give the Lord's Teru-
 mah to *Aaron the Priest*. Who did not
 live, saith he, to enter into the land of
Canaan; and therefore must be raised a-
 gain to receive the portion of the Lord
 in that good Land. And yet this is as
 strong an argument as that of *R. Solomon*,
 who concludes it merely from the two
Jods in the word יצ"ו ii. *Gen.* 7. where it
 is said, the LORD God formed man, &c.
 This signifies, saith he, that man must be
 formed twice; once in this world, and
 once in the next at the resurrection of
 the dead. There are more of this nature
 in the *Gemara* of the *Sanhedrin* *, which
 I shall not trouble the Reader withall :
 but onely note, that the weakness and
 uncertainty of these proofs make the *Sa-*
maritans brag of the advantage they have
 of the *Jews*; because they say, in their
 Penta-

* Vid.
 Coch. c.xi.
 n. 2, 3, 9.

Pentateuch (which therefore they would have to be the true copy of *Moses* his Law) there is an expresse text to prove the Resurrection and the Life to come, which the *Jews* cannot shew. So desirous were all that had the possession of these Books, to find these Truths plainly recorded there; which even those words, which the *Samaritans* pretend to be a part of their Law, do not contain. All is dark and doubtfull, after their best glosses and inferences; and we can conclude nothing certainly, but that God did not reveal these things to *Moses*, who was sent to make a covenant of another nature with the *Israelites*. Whence it was that they were so much disputed by a great party among the *Jews*, as every body knows; the *Pharisees* affirming, and the *Sadducees* denying. Which left the minds of the multitude in much doubt, while they saw these two Schools so resolutely opposing one the other.

And if we pass from the Law to the *Prophets*, especially to the Prophet *Isaiah*, who (as *Abarbinel* says in his Preface to him) speaks more clearly of the Resurrection of the dead than all the rest, we shall not receive much greater satisfaction.

For

For the places from whence it is deduced do so evidently belong to another sense in the first intention of the Prophet, that it forces us to confess this Doctrine was but obscurely delivered in those days ; and that we could not have been certain of any other sense, without the benefit of a Revelation. The proofs which *Abarbinel* brings are, xviii. *Isa.* 4. xxiv. 18, 21, 22, 23. xxv. 8. xxvi. 19. lxvi. 8, 14, 24. and such like : which when we have seriously examined, it will excite us with the greater admiration to acknowledge the infinite grace of God towards us ; who do not see these things through shadows, nor have need of long discourses to extract this heavenly Doctrine out of our Books, but in express terms reade, *So God loved the world, that he gave his onely-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* iii. *Joh.* 16. *And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even ETERNALL LIFE.* i Epist. ii. 25. What is there in all the Prophets like to this, *I am the resurrection and the life : he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live : And whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die ?* xi. *Joh.* 25, 26. The clearest place is that

* *Ib.* &
in XX.
Rev. II.

that in *Daniel*, xii. 2. And yet, if we reade the words going before, (not to say *Mr. Brightman* *, *Grotius*, and other learned Writers upon the place,) we shall not be able to deny that he is speaking of a particular Resurrection, from exceeding great oppression, to a long state of prosperity. Which typified indeed in a very admirable manner (as *Ezekiel's* dry bones and many other things did) the state of the Generall Resurrection and eternall Blessedness ; but did not plainly reveal it. This was reserved for our Lord *Jesus Christ*, who brought life and immortality to light by his Gospell ; and openly proclaimed, that ALL (not MANY, as it is in *Daniel*,) *that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth : they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.* v. *Joh.* 28, 29.

II. But we shall see more reason to bless the infinite goodness of God towards us Christians, if we observe, as we may easily from what hath been said, that as they wanted the expresse promises which we have ; so what they understood of the nature of this Felicity, by the light they

they enjoyed, was but very dull in comparison with what is revealed to us. Who can see more even in their Books then they could do themselves; and find out that by the light of the Gospell, which was wrapt up in dark figures and clouds under the Law and the Prophets. As they saw *Christ* in *Isaac* and in a *Lamb*; so they beheld Heaven under the figure of *Paradise*, and in a *Land flowing with milk and honey*, and in the *Holy city*, and the *Temple of stone*; the greatest glory whereof was, when it was filled with the cloud. 1 *King*. viii. 10; &c. But now in the Church of the New Testament there is no Temple, *but the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the Temple of it.* xxi. *Rev.* 22: And he saith not now, *I will dwell in thick darkness*; but, as it follows there, ver. 23. *the glory of God inlightens the Church; and the Lamb is the Light thereof*: who hath made us *with open face to behold his glory* in the heavens; and given us full assurance that *we shall be changed into the same image, from glory to glory.* 2 *Cor.* iii. 18. This he published so clearly, that the dullest and most illiterate souls saw there was no Master comparable to him, who had *the Words of eternall life*; and by his *Death, Resurrection and Ascension,*

M m opened

* Tom. vi.
L. xix.
contra
Faust.
Man. cap.
ab.

opened to all believers the *Kingdom of heaven*. That's a word St. *Austin* confesses * he could not find in all the Old Scriptures; and St. *Hierom* says the same. There are Testimonies there, saith he, of Eternall life, whether plain or obscure it matters not: (though the places he alledges would have been obscure, if we had not been enlightened, before we reade them, by the Gospel:) *but this Name of the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN I can meet withall in no place: Hoc enim propriè pertinet ad revelationem Novi Testamenti; For it properly belongs to the Revelation of the New Testament.* And it is a word, as the Authour of the Answers *ad Orthodoxos* teaches us, which doth not simply signifie the Resurrection, ἀνάστασις μετὰ τὴν ἀνάστασιν ἀπανάστασιν: but the state of things after the Resurrection, when we shall be so marvellously changed, as to be fit companions for the Angels, and reign with our Saviour in his glory.

Of which things the *Jews* have now so little knowledge, that they expect only to rise again to feast here upon earth with the *Messiah* whom they look for; and after they have spent some years in the enjoyment of the good things of an earthly Paradise, then they think their bodies

bodies shall die, and their Souls onely live for ever *. Let any one that is able but reade what *Manasseh ben Israel* hath writ of the Resurrection; and he will find it such poor stuff, that the best use that can be made of it will be, to put our selves in mind how much we stand ingaged to the Divine love, for acquainting us so plainly with the Happiness he will give us at the Resurrection of our bodies to an immortal life. Our Saviour, indeed, saith they might have learnt better out of the Scriptures, then to imagine there will be eating and drinking and marrying after the resurrection: but there was none of their books could teach them that we should be companions of Angels, and shine like the Sun, and see God, and be coheirs with *Christ*, and such like things; which by the Gospell are now so clearly discovered to us, that the most ignorant know more then the wisest that want this Revelation.

* Vid. Jacchia-
des in viii.
Dan. 14.
& L' Em-
pereur
ib.

R. Tanchum (who would fain prove the life of the World to come from the words of *Abigail*, who speaks of the binding *David's* Soul in the bundle of life, *1 Sam. xxv. 29* *.) observes, that this Mystery, which was a stranger to mens understandings in other nations, and far

* D. Po-
cock. Not.
miscell.
c. vi. p. 91.

remote from their thoughts, to the knowledge of which none but very wise men came, by much labour and exercise, and after long disquisitions and difficult reasonings, was known then among the *Jews*, and manifest even to the *Women*. An argument, saith he, that wisdom was much spread in our Nation, and that, as *Moses* speaks, iv. *Deut. 6. we are a wise and understanding people.* Which is far truer of the Disciples of the Lord *Jesus*; among whom even the most simple are taught such things, as (whatsoever such a wise woman as *Abigail* may be supposed to understand in ancient days) their greatest Doctours have been so ignorant of since, that we see the words of *Isaiab* xxix. 14. fulfilled in them, *The Wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid. Where is the wise? (as St. Paul triumphs over them, 1 Cor. i. 20, 27.) where is the Scribe? where is the disputer of this world? God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise.* Made use, I mean, of such men as the World, for want of humane learning, accounted no better then fools, to publish so clearly and with such evidence the doctrine of *Eternall Life*; that it may justly make
men

men of the greatest repute for learning blush, who could not speak one wise word about it.

But suppose them all to have been indued with a clearer sight then indeed they had of the Life to come; yet of the Blessedness which God intends for us there, that of St. *Paul* (1 Cor. ii. 9.) will still be true; *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* There is a passage in the Prophet *Isaiah* very like this, lxiv. 4. which the Jewish Doctours themselves expound, in the mysticall sense, of the future life; and from thence St. *Paul* is supposed to have borrowed these expressions. Though the very words themselves of St. *Paul* being found in the Apocryphall Book of *Elias*, it is probable, as *Grotius* thinks, that this was grown a common saying among the *Rabbins*; who had been taught, by ancient tradition, to expect such things in the days of the *Messiah*, as never any eye had seen, nor ear heard, nor had entred into any man's heart to conceive. Which is verified in the whole Revelation of God's will in the Gospell; especially in this part of it.

No man had so much as a thought or a desire of such things as God hath done for us, and intends to doe by our Lord *Jesus*. That he should send from heaven his own Son, his onely-begotten Son, begotten of him before all worlds, to be incarnate of a pure Virgin, to die for our sins, that he might rise again to sit at God's right hand, where our Nature shines far brighter then all the glorious host of heaven, are such things as they had no imagination of who expected the coming of *Christ*. Much less did they think of being so promoted by him in his heavenly Kingdome, that they should at last arrive at the same glory; and this clod of earth should be lifted up to the dwellings of Angels, and there be fashioned like unto the glorious body of *Christ* himself. These are things, as *St. Austin* you heard said before, which are proper to the revelation of the *Gospel*; wherein we reade this unheard-of love so plainly, that every child may understand it. But without this revelation, even they that have got the words sink into the dullest and most gross apprehensions of the future State. The *Mahometans* use these very words to express the felicity they expect in their Paradise; saying, *God hath prepared*

pared for his servants such things as eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor have come up into the heart of man *. But they mean onely (as they themselves explain it) virgins with fairer and larger eyes then ever they beheld in this world, and such like things which I am ashamed to name: beyond which these blockish vicious *Arabians* were not able to lift their minds. They are the words of *Maimonides*, upon this occasion, who talks more rationally, I shew'd in the beginning of this Treatise, then many of his Brethren: in whom we find conceptions of the state of the other life little less sensuall then these of *Mahomet*.

* D. Poscock. not. ad Gregor. Abul. Phara. p. 292.

Blessed be God therefore, should we say, who hath revealed these unseen, unheard-of, inconceivable things to his *Apostles* by his Spirit; and made us understand what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the Saints. We can never thank him enough, who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love. By whom we understand that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; but we shall be changed, and made spirituall

and *heavenly*, after the image of him who is *the Lord from heaven*.

III. And we are bound to the love of God above all other men in another regard also ; because he hath given us such *Records*, such *Witnesses* of this Eternall life ; far greater then ever the World had seen or heard of before.

When men saw *Abel*, that first-fruit of righteousness, (as *Theodoret* calls him,) hastily pluckt by the hand of violence before it was ripe ; and his murtherous Brother *Cain* survive, and take root, and build cities ; there was great danger that men should be tempted to think it was in vain to serve God faithfully, there being as yet no hope of the Resurrection to comfort mens Souls. And therefore God was pleased for this reason, as **Theodoret* thinks, to translate *Enoch*, a man whose piety exceedingly pleased him, to the other world, εἰς ψυχαιωγίαν τῶν τῆς ἀρετῆς ἀδελφῶν, that he might comfort the hearts of those who resolutely opposed vice, and contended for vertue, in a wicked Age. And this was apt to revive in all mens minds a belief of his Providence, and perswade them that piety never went

* *Quest.*
xlv. in
Genesin.

went unrewarded ; but that he who thus honoured *Enoch*, had taken care to recompense righteous *Abel*. Such was the grace of God to men before the *Lam*. And afterward, when the *Israelites* were greatly degenerate, and fallen into Idolatry, *Elias* their Prophet was carried in a chariot of fire by a whirlwind into heaven. These things were mighty encouragements to good men, and were apt to confirm all in the belief of a future life. But who is there whose name stands upon record to testify that he saw *Enoch* snatcht from this mortall life, and taken up to God ? And of *Elias* his transportation, what witness is there more then one, till our Saviour's time ; when three of his Apostles beheld him and *Moses* too (which was more then they knew of) appear in glory ? Whereas we have no less then Six Witnesses, three in Heaven and three on Earth, who many ways testify to us that *Jesus is gone into heaven, and (which is more) is on the right hand of God, Angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.* 1 Pet. iii. 22. All his Apostles likewise saw him ascend thither, and he hath appeared to more then one of them since his supereminent exaltation. What a vast difference hath
his

* Lib. v.
cap. 5.

his goodness made between us and former times? They beheld something of the life to come in *Enoch*; *justorum translationem præmonstrans*, (as *Irenæus* * speaks,) who foreshewed the translation of the just; but we see it clearly in the *Son of God*, who hath promised to take us up to himself. They saw a few beams of this glory in the face of *Moses*, which shone on them when he came down from the Mount: but we in the face of *Jesus Christ*; who, all the time he was among men, shone in such illustrious works, that they beheld his glory, the glory as of the onely-begotten of the Father; and after he ascended to heaven, appeared severall times from thence in a light above the brightness of the Sun at mid-day. What a vast difference is there between our times and theirs? * *Ἐπὶ γὰρ ἐν σκιαῖς ἦν ἡ πίστις*. For faith then was in Shadows, (as *St. Greg. Naz.* * speaks of *Enoch's* translation,) and they had not the things themselves clearly revealed to them; as we have by the grace of the Gospel: which, when it appeared, was so bright and full of glory, that it scattered, nay consumed, as the other *Gregory* * speaks, *πάντα τὰ τότε τὴν σκιοειδῆ φαντασίαν*, all that dusky umbratick representation in types and figures; and inlightned all places

* Orat. xx.
p. 366.

* Gregor.
Nyssen.
Hom. v. in
Cantic. p.
642.

ces with the beams of that true light, of life and immortality.

And more then this; there is not the least evidence, no syllable of any record which testifies that any of these persons had *life in themselves*, to give to their friends, or so much as help them forward to Eternall Life. No; nor do they say that others who fear God shall have the same felicity to which they were carried; though their very going thither put pious men in hope of being happy with them in heaven. Whereas we have abundant testimonie in so many words, that *Jesus hath life in himself*, and is *the Resurrection and the Life*; that we shall *live by him*, and *with him*; that *none shall perish* who believe on him, nor any be able to *pluck them out of his hands*; that *He himself will raise them up at the last day*, and *give unto them eternall life*. y. *Joh.* 26. vi. 57. x. 28. xi. 25. vi. 40, 44. 54.

Then indeed, in those old times, was the Infancy of the World; and being little *Children*, (though they were *heirs*, yet) they differed not much from *Servants*. They knew not what their Father

ther intended for them, nor understood the inheritance to which they were born: no more then a child does what the enjoyments of a man are, till he come to that estate. Unto that growth we are now arrived, who have the knowledge of God's grace in *Christ Jesus*. We are now the Sons of God: and though it do not appear (as I said before) how we shall be his Sons hereafter; yet this we know, that we shall be like him when he appears; for we shall see him as he is. And therefore we cannot refrain from crying out again, *Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us*. Let us admire it, let us adore it; for never was there such love.

III.

But it is not sufficient onely to admire this incomparably transcendent love; which naturally excites in the hearts of those that consider it such an ardent reciprocal affection, as leads them to an universall chearfull obedience to God's will. That's the proof our Saviour justly expects of our unfeigned love to him. He would have us, if we be truly sensible of the kindness he hath done us, not
labour

labour so much for the meat that perisheth, as for the meat that endureth unto everlasting life, which he will give unto us. Take any pains, that is, to be so happy as he designs to make us : which no man can refuse who hath once set his affections, not on things beneath, but on those which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. And this he may well expect we will doe, now that he hath so clearly demonstrated where our Happiness lies, and given us such assurance that he lives for ever to bring us to it. This will move us, if any thing in the world can do it, to come when he invites us, to take his yoke upon us, and stoop to his burthen ; so shall we find rest to our Souls. This Eternall life, as the Divine Record tells us, is onely in the Son of God : part of the meaning of which words is, that onely by the Religion which our Lord *Jesus* hath taught us is this great Good to be obtained. This is testified to us by God as much as any thing else, that there is no way to be happy but by his Son *Jesus* ; who hath shewn us the onely means to obtain glory, honour and immortality, is by patient continuance in well doing. True Vertue is the preparation for it, without which

* L. ii. de
Legibus
p. 661.

which nothing is good for us; neither health, nor riches, nor beauty, nor strength, nor power, nor nor immortality, (as *Plato* * excellently discourses,) should we suppose it added to all these: but it is best that an evill man *ὡς ὀλίγον χρόνον ἐπιζῇ*, should live as little a while as may be.

Which demonstrates again the incomparable love of God, in revealing those things to us which are so necessary for the securing and promoting our present happiness in this World. Where, as we could not be safe without the belief of a Life to come; so this alone is sufficient to make the whole World most happy, if it were deeply planted in it. We are infinitely therefore indebted to the Almighty goodness for making this so certain. For this World would be a place full of nothing but confusion, disorder and mischief, were not the evill inclinations of men over-ruled by a belief of something to follow in another life. This restrains them from those outrages, which their power many times inables them to commit with impunity while they are here. Their bold and violent spirits are check'd and curb'd, whensoever they think there

is a greater Lord then they, who will call them to an account. Blessed be God therefore, we have all reason to say, who hath so evidently demonstrated there is a Life to come, after we go from hence; and, by the resurrection of *Christ Jesus* from the dead, assured us he hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in righteousness. This belief not onely restrains men from doing evill, but, which is much more, will even force them to doe well. It alone is sufficient, as I said, to make the World happy, did we thoroughly entertain it. Let a man but believe stedfastly there is a Life to come in another world, and you need not instruct him how to behave himself here. That one Principle will teach him to make an exact difference between good and evill; and awaken his Soul to attend to those directions which he finds there, for the regulating his actions towards God and man. And this it doth with such a force, that as a man cannot be ignorant, if he think of this, what he ought to doe on all occasions; so neither his naturall propension to sin, nor his evill customs, nor corrupt doctrines, nor the common received fashions among men, nor meanness of parts, nor multitude of business,
nor

nor the conceived difficulty of Religion, will be able to hinder that man from doing as he ought, whose breast is possessed with the thoughts of immortall life. Neither nobility nor meanness of birth, riches nor poverty of estate, freedom nor servitude of condition, thirst of glory nor fear of contempt, the praise of some nor the scorn of others, the company of our equals nor the commands of superiours, no gain, no loss, nothing that we desire, nothing that we dread, can stand before the force of this single argument, if it be settled in the heart. For the love of life it self, which is the first of all goods that we receive, and the last of all that we lose, is overcome by this, and submits to the disposall of this Eternity of life. So that this is an Universall Medicine to purge us of all vicious humours, to strengthen and fortifie our Nature, and to revive and comfort the most languishing and fainting spirits. It is an Engine strong enough to remove the most ponderous impediments that lie in our way; an unanswerable reason for any duty; and such a demonstration, as not onely perfectly satisfies our mind, but, being once seated there, will never go out again.

The truth of this will be apparent to those that consider;

1. That *this Motive alone contains all other whatsoever in it*: there being more in these two words, **ETERNALL LIFE**, then kingdoms; and thrones; and treasures; and glory, and joy; and a thousand such like words can express. By which we may judge what force there is in that to make us doe well; in which the strength of all other arguments, from greatness, honour, riches, pleasure, to engage our affections, are concentrated and united. There is as vast a difference therefore between this and all other perswasives to the will, as between the beams of the Sun when they are gathered in a glass; which set all combustibles that approach them on fire; and the same beams scattered and dispersed in the air, when they work onely by their single virtue. By reason of which excellency it is, that it meets with every man's desires, and hath something in it agreeable to his hopes. And to every one of those men of different desires, it presents also every thing: So that the ambitious; for example; hath the greatest glory and honour set before

his eyes to invite him to it ; with the addition of pleasure, joy, peace, and all other desirable goods. Whereby it breaks the force of all temptations which would divert us from piety ; or rather heightens and lifts up our minds above them, as things inconsiderable. For, a man's Spirit being naturally formed into a likeness of the objects with which he is conversant, his Mind who hath his thoughts in heaven necessarily becomes great and heavenly ; and is inspired with such a generous and divine sense, that he is not moved with the solicitations of these little things here, but overlooks them all, as much below him. He is made sublime and truly noble by frequent conversation with so great a Good ; and scorns to stoop to the lure of those temptations, which have such power upon earthly souls.

12. For such is the force of this motive, it is manifest from hence, that (as I discoursed in the beginning) *it speaks to the whole man*, and leaves no part of him untouched and unsatisfied. The Understanding cannot say it is not satisfied with seeing, nor the Will that it is not satisfied with loving, nor the Affections that they
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are not filled with joy, nor any part of man complain that it wants a share in this Eternall life. For even the Body, we saw, shall partake of the glory that shall be revealed, and be much improved in strength, and beauty, and agility, and durability; being made incorruptible. So that while other, petty goods, do onely still the craving of one desire, (and that but for a little time,) leaving the rest discontented; this intirely and at once quiets all, and brings in an universall fullness; being the very life of God himself. It is desirable therefore upon its own account and for it self alone; there being nothing beyond it (as there is in other goods) for which we should desire it. We intend by the gaining of any thing here, to come to the possession of some other good. But it is not so in our desires of Eternall Life; which being the last and chiefeft Good, our thoughts naturally rest and repose themselves, when they come there, and seek no farther. There our hearts settle, and no longer rove up and down in uncertainty after every thing we fantasie. For the hope of it gives us a full contentment within our selves, and thereby preserves us from a needless pursuit of this and the other enjoyment;

and leaves us little else to doe, but to secure the inheritance of so great a Blessedness.

3. And that we cannot miss, if we keep it in our thoughts : for so great is the efficacy of this Good, that *it cannot be refused*. It is not in our power to set it at nought, (as we may do other things, which have something greater then themselves to be their competitors in our affections ;) because it is a Good so excellent, that there is none above it, or equal to it. It will not let us so much therefore as deliberate (when we attend to it) whether we will have it or no ; but forces it self upon us on any terms or conditions whatsoever. And can there be a greater motive to doe well then this ; which not onely baffles all temptations, and quiets the heart so that it need not gad abroad after every little thing in this world ; but also quite takes away all liberty to reject it, and leaves us no power to chuse whether or no we will embrace it ? Answer me in your own thoughts ; What is there more perswasive then that, which we can have no will at all, if we mind it, to deny ? Such is the condition of *Eternall Life*, which inclines

inclines the will, just as a talent doth the scales, when there is nothing but air in the contrary balance, without any the least hovering or deliberation which way to turn. And were it alway present to us, it would wholly deprive us of all our liberty to doe otherwise then it would have us. By reason indeed of its being in expectation hereafter, and that it becomes sensible to us now onely by serious thoughts, a strong and lively faith, and by the power of the Holy Ghost; the will of man retains a liberty, (which while this Good is before him he is quite despoiled of,) whereby he too often chuses other things before this Eternall life. But were it not for this, he could not chuse but embrace it intirely : which sufficiently manifests the force of it in its own nature, if we will but be at the pains, by consideration, faith, and prayer for the Holy Spirit of God, to bring it into frequent view and set it before us. And what is there imaginable of greater efficacy to move us to such constant diligence to bring it near to our hearts then this, that when we see it, our wills have no power to be indifferent, either to it, or the well-doing which leads unto it. Nay, I may adde this; So great is the

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force

force of this argument, that, though onely the absence of it some time from our thoughts can make it possible we should perish; yet the Will, being mightily affected with its presence, doth not onely love it, but lays its commands upon the mind also to inquire and advise more seriously about the way to attain it at last, by preserving a constant sense of it at present. It hath no list to part with so great a Good; and therefore excites the Understanding to find out the means to keep and maintain a lively apprehension of it, and requires it to be carefull and diligent in the continuall use of those means.

4. And truly it is such a Good (by which also you may judge how forcible a motive it is) as *makes all means whatsoever, whereby we may attain it, lovely and desirable*. There is no Rule more known then this, that the End we design prevails with us to love those Means, which we would not love for themselves. As the hope of having our health restored, makes bitter pills and distastfull potions go down well enough. But what is there, except perhaps the desire of saving our lives, which will render every thing what-

whatsoever acceptable? It is the privilege of this Good alone, to dispose a man to refuse nothing, no not death it self, that he may enjoy it. It commands over all the evil things in this world, as well as over the good; and makes a man willing to endure the one, as well as turn away from the invitation of the other. It makes the greatest *ends* a man hath in this world to submit to serve as *means* to bring us to it. And what will you imagine of greater virtue then that, which will be received by all means? Suppose a man should be content to lose his pleasures and recreations, and health too, for the getting riches; which is all he aims at while he lives: but see here a Good which will make him willing to lose them too, for so glorious a purchase. Or suppose a man will chuse to lose all his worldly goods which he hath got, that he may preserve his liberty, and not be enslaved: here is a greater Good still, which will dispose a man to kiss his cords or his chains, and sing, like *Paul* and *Silas*, in the innermost prison. Or suppose again, that, to save his life, a man should embrace the chains and fetters which tie him fast to his oar: here is something still beyond this, which is the onely thing that

can make a man chearfully sacrifice his life; for the loss of which nothing else can make him any recompence. The reason is, because there is no proportion between this and all other things, either as to greatness, or goodness; not so much as between a Kingdom and a barley-corn.

5. And therefore I may adde, that *it will make us in love with all piety at once*; and with all the means leading to it, though never so troublesome. It doth not work upon us after the way of Art, but as Nature it self doth. It doth not teach us vertue and godliness by little parcels, as a Statuary first forms one part of his statue, and then another, now working on the face, and then on the hands or feet; but instills it altogether in the whole mass, (as I may so speak,) and works in us such an universall love to goodness, as to have a ready will presently to doe whatsoever God would have us. Just as you see the spirit of Nature or a particular Soul work in the formation of the body of a plant, or of an animal in the womb; which it begins in all its proportions together, and so proceeds on still to bring the parts to a greater bigness and strength: even so doth this
mighty

mighty Good operate when it touches the heart, not inclining it first to the grace of temperance, and then by another touch to the grace of charity, and after that by a third to the grace of contentedness, &c. but at once begets an hearty love to universall goodness, and forms the whole body of Christian Vertues all together; which grow up after the same manner all alike, there being the same power inspiring us unto all. Which may spare me the labour of shewing what a Motive it is to inforce the practice of every particular Vertue. Which it makes easie also; because this one thing, which is the reason for all, is easily kept in our mind. *Eternall Life* is like a short Sentence, which contains in it the pith and strength of a long Discourse: or like unto a little Leaven, which infuses it self into the whole mass wherewith it is mixed. And it makes all Divine graces intire and perfect also. For where the mind is once impregnated with it, and it hath begun a Divine life there, it will never produce a monstrous birth. No lim of the New man, if I may so speak, shall here be wanting. It will not suffer us, I mean, to be defective in any part of true piety; nor shall one part draw all the

the nourishment to it, and overgrow the rest. It will not let us spend our zeal about some particulars, while we are cold and remiss in other Christian duties; but make us equally affected and spirited unto all. From whence likewise arises another benefit; that while, by the thoughts of this, we excite our selves to any one grace, we promote our growth also in every one. When we stir up our selves to the practice of our present duty, we are disposed thereby to the like chearfull obedience on any other emergent occasion. When we call up our Souls by this to doe God's will, it impowers us also (though we should not then think of it) to suffer what he would have us. And while we animate our selves hereby to suffer one thing, it enables us to doe and suffer all.

O the power of this Divine Good, if it once seat it self in the very throne of our hearts! How it makes them beat with the love of God, and with the love of our neighbour! How it inspires us with resolution, with confidence, with zeal, with joy, with all other pious affections! It will let us scruple none of God's Commands, because it is of equall
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force to make us submit to all. Neither prophaneness nor hypocrisy, neither listlessness nor despondency, can ever lodge in that heart where this belief is deeply rooted; that God will give to our little short labours here, an immense eternall recompence in the other World.

6. One cannot imagine how it should be otherwise, if we go on to consider once more how naturally *this belief fills our hearts with love* to that blessed God, who is so good as to design us such inconceivable Blessedness; and to his will, as the onely way and means to be partaker of it. We shall easily be perswaded that the Will of him who promises us immortality must needs be the Rule of Goodness. It will never enter into our hearts to suspect, that he who loves us so much can enjoin us any thing but what is truly good for us. And so our wills and affections will readily bow and stoop to his, without any dispute at all about it.

But I have said too much already about this business, to have any room left for a new argument of the power of this great Good.

IV.

Let us proceed rather to consider what the matter is, that a Motive in it self so great and so powerfull should have so little power upon mens hearts, to move them to vertue and goodness. One may justly wonder at it, and ask, What is the cause that men are so dull, so sluggish, so backward to doe well, since the reward is so certain, so transcendent; and it is as certain they will miss of it in any other way but this of vertue and piety? Where is the *Violence* which the holy Gospel speaks of, and which in all reason was to be expected when the Kingdom of heaven was opened? One would have thought, upon the report of so great a Blessedness, men would have throng'd into heaven; and with eager violence striven to thrust in themselves before others into such preferment as was offered them in our Saviour's Kingdom. His Disciples, sure, thought that men could not chuse, when they heard such news, but all flock to his fold, and prepare themselves to receive his blessing. And there have been those* who have fancied the Apostles were so possessed with these thoughts, that this was

* Maldonado and de Celada.

was the reason they were troubled to hear our Saviour say, *whither he went, they could not go*; (that is, at present; *xiii. Joh. 33.*) because they imagined all would run so thick towards the Bliss which he promised, that if they went not to heaven with him then, it was to be questioned whether there would be any room left for them, and all places might not be taken up before they came. And to comfort them, our Saviour, say they, *bid them not be troubled, for in his father's house were many Mansions*: (*xiv. 1, 2.*) that is, there was room for all comers, though never such multitudes. The discourse indeed of our Saviour there shews that this is but a fancy: yet if we consider the haste men make in any other advantageous offers, and how they will strive to prevent and circumvent one another, to gain any preferment here in this world; they might well think that men would come in as great crowds to heaven, as we have seen them sometime come to Church; and would all run as men do in a race, contending earnestly who should carry away the crown. For *honorum quorundam, sicut & malorum, est intolerabilis magnitudo*; the greatness of some goods, as well as of some evils, is so

so excessive and intolerable; (as *Tertullian*, if I forget not, somewhere speaks,) that it weighs down all that can be cast into the scale against it; and suffers not our wills, as you have heard, to deliberate about it. Whence is it then that we see so little care and concern about that *far more exceeding eternall weight of glory*? that good which is so vast, that in this state we cannot bear the very thoughts of it? In stead of that forwardness which might have been expected, there is a strange backwardness so much as to think of these things. A prodigious nummes and stupidity hath seized on the hearts of Christian people, who seem to have no life at all in them. To what shall we impute it; seeing the Sun of righteousness hath shone so brightly and strongly on them, with these chearfull beams of *Eternall Life*, which he hath brought to light through his Gospel?

Is there any thing here that can pretend to vie with the *Eternall Life* he hath revealed? I will not stay for an Answer, the disparity is so great between this and all other goods. What is it then which makes men so indifferent? Is there little or no hope that God will bestow such

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great and glorious things, upon such vile wretches as we are? No; he hath *promised*, and *prepared* them, as you have heard; and he cannot be worse then his word, nor lose all his own preparations. What is it then that stifles their endeavours after this immortall bliss? Will he not give it but upon very hard terms, and such rigorous conditions as are enough to freez the warmest resolutions, when we think of them? Not this neither: For he hath prepared these good things *for those that love him*. And what is there more easie, what more pleasant and chearfull then love? especially of the first and chiefest Good? which will certainly make all our duty as easie and delightfull as it self is. Or will you say, that we cannot love him; it is an impossible Condition? For shame consider, that the very offer of such glorious things is enough to make us love him intirely, if we did believe them. Were we perswaded that he will bestow upon good men such happiness with himself, so great, so long; it would inflame our hearts with the most ardent passion towards his service. Therefore I have already named the true cause of all mens coldness and sloth. After all our search, we shall find it nothing else but
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this, They do not believe. They are not perswaded of the certainty of the rewards in the other World, or have not fixed this belief in their Minds: for if they had, it would not easily slip out again. They are moved strongly by what they see with their eyes, and feel with their hands, and taste with their tongues; but faith hath little or no place or power in their hearts. This is proved to be too true by the lives of men; which are so base and unworthy, as if they did not hope for the happiness of a fly in the other World.

Therefore every one of our business must be, to awaken that faith in our Souls which we profess; that Divine principle, which is of such force as to overcome the World. For it is manifestly true, which the Apostle writes, that *without faith it is impossible to please God*. We shall never doe any thing worthy of him, unless we believe that God is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him. As, on the contrary, it is no less manifest that, if we do believe, we shall not only please him, but we shall please our selves in doing so, and find it most delightful to be religious. It will marvelously inliven us, and infuse, as it were,
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A new spirit and soul into us: so that we shall differ as much from our selves, as the corn doth when it is sown in the ground, and when it shoots up again in all its verdure and beauty. It will make us adorn our selves, I mean, with all the fruits of righteousness; and beget in us such a spirituall life, as will fructify and increase in all good works.

And here consider, *first*, That the things themselves propounded to our belief are such, as we cannot but desire it should be true, that God intends to bestow them on us. Who is there that would not willingly live for ever? that doth not think Immortality the greatest prerogative of humane Nature? provided we may live always in joy and pleasure, in uninterrupted contentments, and never-fading delights. Though they should be less then our Lord hath promised, there is no heart but above all things wishes to be so happy. To see onely the beautifull orders of the heavenly hosts, the glorious Company of the Apostles, the goodly Society of the Prophets, the noble Army of Martyrs, the venerable Quire of Pastors, the whole multitude of holy men and women, who celebrate a

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perpetuall feast of joy ; to live in happy friendship with them, to love them, and to be beloved of them ; to bear a part in their eternall Song of praise and thanks to God ; how desirable is it above any thing that we can fanſy in this world ? No man hath ſo little love to himſelf, as not to wiſh he might be numbred among thoſe Saints in glory everlaſting. It's impoſſible we ſhould not be pleaſed with the thoughts of having a conſortſhip in ſuch an incomparable happineſs ; were we but perſwaded that it is not a dream, but a reall truth. There needs nothing more to bring it into all mens favour, but onely to be ſatiſfied that there is ſuch an Happineſs.

And that's the *other* thing I would propound to your thoughts ; That as we naturally deſire ſuch an Happineſs, ſo, if we conſider the evident demonſtrations we have of it in the Goſpell, this and a great deal more appears to be the undoubted inheritance of all good Souls ; who ſhall *ſee God, and be with our Lord, and behold his glory.* Which wonderfully recommends the Chriſtian Religion to us ; wherein we are gratified in our moſt important deſires, and have thoſe things made ſure and certain to us
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which we would all fain have for our portion. For what is the generall intent of the Gospell, but to discover to mankind immortall life, and the way to it? This was the great end of our Saviour's appearing; who brought that glimmering light that was in mens minds, of the other world, to a more perfect day. And upon this errand the Apostles were sent, as you have heard; *to call men to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Thess. ii. 14.* Which made the jews so unexcusable that *they would not come unto our Lord, that they might have life; (v. Joh. 40.)* though there was the greatest reason in the world to believe this Record, that *God hath given us Eternall life; and this life is in his Son.*

A voice from heaven, I have shewn you, often testified as much: and so did the *Holy Ghost*, which descended on our Saviour at his baptism; and the many *signs and wonders* whereby God the Father sealed him, and set, as it were, his mark, stamp and character upon him; that all might know who he was, and believe his word as undoubtedly, as if they heard God the Father himself speaking to them continually with his own voice out of heaven. From thence our Saviour came, it was

apparent ; and therefore did not pretend to discover things of which he had no certain knowledge , but onely revealed that happy Country from whence he descended. So he professes to a very wise man among the *Jews*, who was convinced, by his many Miracles, that he was a Teacher come from God ; iii. *Joh. 2. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen : ver. 11.* For as he came down from heaven ; (as he farther tells him ver. 13.) so at that very moment he was there, and had a most intimate familiarity and communication therewith : and therefore might well say , he *had seen* the things he reported from thence. What they were, you may reade in the following verses, 15, 16. *That whosoever believeth in him, should not perish , but have everlasting life, &c.*

The very same , as I have likewise shewn , *John Baptist* testified, ver. 36. And so did *Moses* and *Elias* ; who appeared in glory, and discoursed with him concerning his return to the other world, after he had done the will of God here. ix. *Luke 30, 31.* At that time our Saviour was *transfigured*, (an evident token

token of the glorifying even of our bodies in the other state,) as three persons of integrity witness; who *saw his glory*, and the two men that stood with him, ver. 32. and were themselves overshadowed with a bright cloud, (an emblem of the glory to come in another World,) and so ravisht with the sight, that they wisht they might always remain in that happy place. Neither was this onely a sudden transport; but it made such a lasting impression upon their minds, that ever after they lookt upon it as a notable proof of the majesty and glory of our Saviour. 2 *Pet.* i. 16, 17. And so did the ancient Christians; as appears by the *Syriack* Translatour of the New Testament, who before the Epistle of St. *James* takes notice, that now follow the Epistles of the *three* Disciples before whom our Lord was transfigured.

This we are to mark diligently, and take it for an eminent token of the glory to which our Lord was to go, and which he should be able to give. For it relies upon the report of those who were persons of known worth, and uprightness of heart; who had no design in the world to serve, but onely to promote such an

important truth, of which they were fully assured. They appeal to all that had any acquaintance with them, whether ever they saw or had reason to suspect any false or double dealing in them; and had not rather been witnesses of their honesty and simplicity in the whole course of their Ministry. *For we are not, as many, saith St. Paul 2 Cor. ii. 17. καπηλεύοντες τὸν λόγον τῆς Θεᾶς, that sell the word of God, and make merchandize of it to enrich themselves thereby: (such might not stick to corrupt God's word, as we render it, and mix their own dreams with it:)* but with all sincerity, as men who are authorized by God, and have him before our eyes, to whom we must give an account of our actions, we publish the Gospell of Christ. Whom they accounted it a great mercy and favour from God to serve. And therefore having received this ministry, (saith he iv. 1, 2.) we are not sluggish in doing our duty, nor do we perform it in a base unworthy manner; but have so renounced, or thrust away far from us, all secret devices of enriching our selves, that we do not blush to think of our designs: (for τὰ κρυπτὰ τῆς αἰχύνης are such practices as for mere shame men hide and cover, pretending, for instance, onely the good

good of Souls, when they intend nothing but to get their money :) *nor do we walk in craftiness*, appearing one thing and being another ; *nor corrupt the word of God*, by mixing any of our own inventions with it ; but in a free, open and plain manner *we commend our selves to all mens consciences, as having God looking on us*. All that know us cannot but approve us ; (if they be not led by passion more then reason ;) and if they do not, God doth. This he repeats again, *Chap. vi.* where he gives a proof of their sincerity, in the exercise of their Ministry, from these two things ; *first*, that they got nothing by it, but many afflictions ; and *then*, that they did nothing but good to others, in recompence for all the trouble they gave them. Of the former he speaks ver. 4, 5. of the second, ver. 6, 7. and then returns to the other again. Which argument he handles also at large towards the conclusion of the same Epistle, xi. 23, 24, &c. and once more xii. 10.

And thus he writes also to the Church of *Thessalonica*, (*1 Thess. ii. 4.*) who knew very well how faithfully they had discharged their trust, and that they did *not accommodate themselves to any man's humour* ;

but plainly delivered the message which God had committed to them. No body could say that they had *used any flattering speeches*, to sooth them up in a vain conceit of themselves, (ver. 5.) nor *used any colours to hide a covetous design* : no, as to their words and addressees, the *Thessalonians* could testify the contrary ; and as to their mind and heart, which God onely could know, they call him to witness, it never entred into their thoughts. Nor did they seek *glory and fame* either from them or any body else, but despised it as much as riches : unless it were the honour of obliging them, by communicating the blessings of the Gospell to them, and receiving no reward from them : ver. 6. They might indeed have put them to charge, and lived upon their cost, as other Apostles of *Christ* did, and that honestly too : But He and his companions were among them with more *gentleness* ; (ver. 7.) they parted, that is, from their own undoubted right, to spare the *Thessalonians* : and as a good nurse cherishes her children ; so they defrauded themselves, and took the meat, as we speak, out of their own mouths, for the good of others whom they desired to breed up in Christian piety. This shews the wonderfull

derfull innocency and goodnes of these men, who got nothing by the Gospell, (no not what they might have lawfully and justly taken,) but onely studied how to win Souls to *Christ*. In short, he calls *them* and *God* also to witness, how *holily*, how *justly*, how *unblamably* they behaved themselves among those that believed; ver. 10. The first of which words refers to *God*; the second to those actions which belong to humane society; and the third to those which every man is bound unto severally by himself: in none of which could *He*, *Silvanus* and *Timotheus*, be charged with any misdemeanour. On which argument he once more insists 2 *Tim.* iii. 10, 11. being so confident of his unreprouable vertue, that he desired nothing more of all that knew him, but to be followers of him, and to walk so as they had him for an example. 1 *Cor.* iv. 16. iii. *Phil.* 17.

All which I have the more particularly noted, because it is from these men that we receive the testimony of *Jesus*. Who, they assure us, chose to die the most shamefull death, when he could have avoided it; and with the greatest
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confidence, when he was expiring, commended his Spirit into the hands of God. Which is an unquestionable argument that he believed, and was assured, that he should be with God, when he went from hence, and be able to doe for his followers all that he promised. Which they tell us moreover God justified, when he raised him from the dead, and carried him, in their sight, up into heaven: and afterward sent the Holy Ghost upon them, to testify that he was still alive, and possessed of an unseen glory. In which, they also tell us, he appeared to severall persons; as I have already related. One of which was caught up into heaven, and heard such things there as made him wish for nothing more, then to leave this earth, and to be with *Christ*. To whom the Angels, they also assure us, witnessed upon severall occasions. For they attended him at his birth, and in his life, and when he died, and after his resurrection, and when he ascended into heaven: From whence he sent them many times, as ministring Spirits, to his Apostles; of which we have very large testimonies in the whole book of the *Revelation*.

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From all which we may safely conclude, that there can no other reason in the world be given, why any man thus informed should not believe the Gospell, but onely his own desperate wickedness. For the things propounded therein are most desirable above all other. It reveals such a wonderfull love of God to mankind, that all men would rejoyce to hear the news of it, were they not averse to those pious and vertuous courses whereby, they are told, they must attain it. Nothing attracts all hearts so much as the hope of a blessed immortality : which is testified to us so credibly in the Gospell, that nothing could make men turn their ears away from it by infidelity, but onely the incurable wickedness of their Nature ; which will not let them part with those vices, which the Gospell says they must quit for so great a Good. In one word, there is nothing in this Book but what is sutable to all mens desires, save onely the holy rule of life : and therefore it can be nothing else but their hatred to this, which makes them reject all the rest. They would follow their nobler appetite after those good things which the Gospell promises, if they had
not

not perfectly given up themselves to those baser appetites, which must be denied for their sake. For if our Gospell be hid, saith St. Paul in the place before mentioned, *it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospell of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.* 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. That which the Gospell reports is as clear as the noon-day. Nothing can be more visible then the φωτισμός τῆς εὐαγγελίας τῆς δόξης τῆς Χρυσῆς, the light or the splendour of the Gospell of the glory of Christ. By which, saith Theophylact, the Apostle means the belief of these great Truths, that Jesus was crucified, that he was received up into heaven, and that he will give future rewards. This is the φωτισμός splendour the Apostle speaks of, which if any man do not see, after such evident demonstrations of these things, it is his wickedness hinders him. And such men, after they have long resisted the light, fall under the power of the Devil so inevitably, that he blinds their eyes. Mark, as St. Chrysostom observes, that the Scripture calls severall things by the name of a God, not from their own worth and excellence, but

Δαδ

ἀπὸ τῆς ἀδυναμίας καὶ ὑποτακτομένων, from the weakness of those who are subject to them. Thus *Mammon* is the God of some, and *the belly* the God of others, and *the Devill* the God of all such persons; because they are basely enslaved to the love of mony, and of their fleshly appetite, and He rules and governs them as absolutely as if he were their God. Yet he hath no power quite to blind their eyes, as he farther observes, before they disbelieve that which is so credibly reported by such Divine arguments: for, as the very words of St. Paul are, *he blinds the minds of them that believe not.* γρόνται ἄνθρωποι δι' ἐαυτοὺς, they became infidels of themselves; and having given themselves over to unbelief, against such miraculous evidence of the truth of the Christian Faith, God gives them over to him: to whose service they have so slavishly devoted themselves, that they cannot be recovered; but, as they deserve, must unavoidably *perish*.

From which miserable condition let all those who are inclined to infidelity take care to save themselves, by timely considering those Divine demonstrations which these holy men of God have reported to

us; who beheld our Saviour's glory, *the glory as of the onely-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. i. Joh. 14.* Upon which words hear what the same eloquent Bishop writes; who thus summs up a great part of the evidence we have for the Christian belief.

S. Chry-
sostom.
Hom. xii.
in Johan.

The Angels appeared in great glory upon the earth to Daniel, David and Moses; but they appeared as servants, as those that had a Master. It is the peculiar glory of our Saviour, that he appeared as a Lord, as having power over all: and though in a poor and vile fashion, yet even in that the Creation knew its Lord and Master. A Star from heaven called the Wise men to worship him. A great company of Angels often attended him, and sang his praises. To whom others succeeded, who published his glory, and delivered this secret Mystery one to another: the Angels to the Shepherds; and the Shepherds to those in the city; and Gabriel to Mary and Elizabeth; and Anna and Symeon to those in the Temple. Nor were men and women onely transported with the pleasure; but an infant that had not seen the light leapt in its mother's womb: and all were strangely lifted up in hopes of what was a-coming.

These

These things all fell out straightway after his birth. But when he appeared in the World, there were more Miracles, and greater then the former, appeared again. For not so little as a Star and the Heavens, not Angels or Archangels, not Gabriel or Michael, but the Father himself proclaimed him from heaven; and with the Father, the Comforter came down with a voice, and remained on him. And therefore well might the Apostle say, We have seen his glory, the glory as of the onely-begotten of the Father. And not by these things alone, but by those which followed after. For now not merely Shepherds, and an aged Prophetess, and reverend men, published the glad tidings of the Gospell; but the voice it self of the things he did, louder then the sound of any trumpet; which was heard presently every-where. For the fame of him, saith the Evangelist, went into all Syria; and revealed him to all, and cried every-where that the King of heaven was come to men. For Demons every-where fled and got away; and the Devill departed; and Death began to give place, and not long after quite vanished; and all manner of infirmities were loosed; and the tombs dismissed the dead; the Demons left those that were mad, and Diseases those that were sick.
Wonder-

Wonderfull and strange things were to be seen, which the Prophets desired to see, and did not. For one might have seen eyes new made, paralytick lims strengthened, motion given to withered hands and lame feet, ears that were stopt up opened, and the tongues of the dumb loosed. In one word, like an excellent workman that comes into an house which is decayed and rotten by time, he repaired, or re-built rather, humane Nature.

For who can tell how he made the Souls of men new, which is a greater wonder then all the rest? For the wills of men oppose their cure, which the body doth not. They will not yield, we see, no, not to God himself. And yet these were reformed by him; and all kind of wickedness expelled. Nor were they onely freed from Sin; but, like the bodies to which he gave the best habit after he had cured their diseases, they were advanced to the highest degree of vertue. A Publican became an Apostle. A persecutour, a blasphemmer, a reproacher of Christianity, turned the Preacher of the Word. A thief was made a Citizen of Paradise: and a strumpet became illustrious by a great faith. And abundance of others, worse then these, were listed in the number of the Disciples,

Disciples, till whole cities and countries were strangely reformed by the Gospell. Who is able to declare the wisdom of his Precepts, the vertue of his heavenly Laws, the excellent order of his Angelicall Conversation? For he hath taught us such a life, he hath given us such laws, and instituted such a polity; that they who use them, though before the worst of men, straightway become Angels, and like to God, according to our power. The Evangelist therefore recollecting all these things, the Miracles he wrought upon mens bodies, upon their Souls, and upon the elements; the Precepts, the secret Gifts, the Laws, the Polity, the power of perswasion, the future Promises, his Sufferings; he pronounced this wonderfull lofty voice, We beheld his glory, the glory as of the onely-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

For they did not admire him onely for his Miracles, but for his Sufferings. As for example, because he was nailed to a Cross and scourged; because he was beaten; because he was spit upon; because those buffeted him, to whom he had been a benefactor: upon the account even of these, which seem most shamefull, that voice is worthy to be repeated again; because he himself hath

called this a Glory. For then Death was destroyed, the Curse was dissolved, Demons were put to shame, and he triumphed over them openly, and the hand-writing of sins, or obligation to punishment, was nailed to the Cross and cancelled. And besides these wonders, which were invisible, there were others apparent unto all; which shewed he was the onely-begotten Son of God, and the Lord of all the Creation. For while his blessed body yet hung upon the Cross, the Sun withdrew its beams, the earth was astonished and wrapt in darkness, the ground shook, the tombs were broke open, a great many dead people walkt out of their graves, and went into the City, the stone upon his grave was rolled away, and he arose. He that was crucified, he that was fastned with nails to the cross, he that was dead arose; and filling his Apostles with great power, sent them to all the World, as the common physicians of humane Nature, the rectifiers of mens lives, the sowers of the knowledge of heavenly Doctrine, the loosers of the Devill's tyranny, the teachers of the great and hidden Goods, the preachers of the glad tidings of the immortality of the Soul, the Eternall life of the body, and the rewards which (as they pass all understanding, so) never have any end.

These

These and many more such like this blessed man beholding, (which he knew, but was not able to write, because the world could not have contained the Books,) he cried out, We beheld his glory, the glory as of the onely-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Who is now as able, I may adde, to give us new bodies, and inconceivably-improved Souls, and then to perpetuate the happiness of both in heaven; as he was to cure diseases, and raise dead bodies, and purify mens minds, when he was here on earth.

Let our conclusion therefore, as he says elsewhere, be suitable to our discourse. And what's so suitable as Doxologies and giving glory to God, in such manner as is worthy of him? Not by our words onely, that is, but much more by our deeds. So our Saviour himself exhorts us, saying, Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorifie your Father which is in heaven. For there is nothing more bright and shining then an excellent conversation, as one of the wise men hath said; The ways of the just shine like the light. And they shine not onely to those that light their lamps by their works, but to all that are near unto them:

*H. m. xiii.
p. 607. 5.*

576 The Use to be made, &c. Part II.

Therefore let us pour oyl continually into these lamps, that the flame may rise higher, and the light shine more abundantly.

Id. p. 611. Having received such grace and truth by Jesus Christ, let us not grow the lazier by the greatness of the gift. For the greater honour hath been done us, the more we are bound to excell in vertue. Let that therefore be our business, to purify our selves so thoroughly, that, being thought worthy to see Christ, we may not at that Day be delivered over to the severe tormenting powers, but to those that are able to bring us to the inheritance in heaven, which is prepared for those that love him. Which God grant we may all obtain, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

C H A P.

CHAP. XIV.

A farther improvement of this RECORD.

THE grounds of Christian belief, you see, are not so slender, but I may take the confidence to say, that he who will be at the pains to consider such things as these, cannot any longer think it a piece of wit to be an infidel. It is rank folly, as well as baseness; there being no reason in the earth to except against these Witnessès, and to deny the Faith of *Christ* an entrance into our minds and hearts. For what we know, as I have shewn in the former Book, by credible report, is as certain as what we see and hear with our eyes and ears. And what can be better attested then the holy Gospel? Which is justly called *the testimony of God*, 1 Cor. ii. 1. and *the testimony of Christ*, i. 6. Because God testified these things to us as his will, by his Son *Christ*; and *Christ* testified them to us by the holy Ghost. For so St. *Paul* saith in the place last named, (ver. 5, 6.) the

Corinthians were enriched by our Lord with every gift ; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed, or established to be a truth, among them.

After which mighty evidence, whereby we are assured God intends to bestow so great a blessing on us as immortall Life, it is of no weight whatsoever can be objected against this Doctrine ; particularly, against that part of it which concerns the Resurrection of the body, at the last day. For that Great Lord who said it, we are certain, can perform it. He knew his own power ; and would not have said, *I will raise you up at the last day*, unless he had been able to make his word good. He hath also already fulfilled his word in other things which he foretold, though no body would believe him till they saw it : which is a good ground, as *St. Gregory Nyssen* observes *, to expect this, though it seem never so difficult, and incredible, had he not promised it. “ Suppose, saith he, that an husbandman, “ discoursing of the virtue of Seeds, should “ not be believed by a by-stander, that “ had never been bred in the country, “ nor seen any thing of that nature : “ would it not be sufficient for his satisf-
“ faction,

* *De opificio hominis* cap. xxv.

"faction, to take but one single grain
 "out of an heap of corn, and to tell him
 "he should see in that the virtue of all
 "the rest? For he that sees one grain of
 "wheat or barley cast into the ground,
 "coming up after some time a full ear,
 "will never doubt of the fruitfulness of
 "all the rest of the same kind. Even just
 "so, saith he, it seems to me a sufficient
 "testimony of the Resurrection, that the
 "truth of other things, which he fore-
 "told, cannot be denied. In them we
 "have an experiment, whereby we may
 "judg of every thing else that he hath said.

But to demand that every thing should
 be made out by reason, before we receive
 it, is to make us *Philosophers*, not *Chri-
 stians*; whose name is *Believers*. And
 besides, the best *Philosophers* cannot tell
 us how the Corn, I now mentioned, grows
 up from a little Seed cast into the ground,
 or a Man from so small a beginning in his
 mother's womb; or any thing conside-
 rable of the manner how all naturall pro-
 ductions are performed. And therefore
 what folly is it to resolve not to be satis-
 fied, unless we shew how a dead body
 can be raised? It is sufficient to know
 that *idoneus est reficere qui fecit*, as *Tertul-*

lian speaks in this case; He that made it at first is able to make it again. It being more, as he goes on, to make, then to re-make; to give a beginning to a thing, then to restore it after it is dissolved. And we have this also to satisfy us; that multitudes saw our Saviour raise men from the dead, and by other miraculous works demonstrate, that he wants not power to doe any thing he hath promised. His word may well be taken for any thing to come, who hath already done such wonders as are credibly reported to us, by those that were spectators of them, in the Gospell.

Greg. Nyss.
ibid.

“ And it is very remarkable how he
 “ deals with us as a Mother doth with
 “ her Child: into whose tender mouth
 “ she first thrusts her breast to nourish it
 “ with milk; and when the teeth come,
 “ gives it bread; and when it is grown
 “ stronger, feeds it with solid meat. E-
 “ ven so our Blessed Lord διὰ τῆς κατὰ
 “ ἡμῶν τῆς σωματοποιίας ἀρχαίμενος, &c.
 “ beginning with lower Miracles at the
 “ first, prepares our faith by degrees for
 “ the highest. He began with the cure
 “ of desperate diseases, in which τὴν τῆς
 “ ἀνθρώπου προσιμύζησαι δύναμιν, he pre-
 “ faced

"faced to his power of raising the dead :
 "For that which men thought impos-
 "sible, he shew'd hereby was not incre-
 "dible. Who could have thought, that
 "one sick of a burning fever should be
 "made so well by speaking a word, as to
 "rise presently, and minister to the com-
 "pany ? yet *Simon's* wife's mother was
 "an instance of this Miraculous power
 "in our Saviour. Who added something
 "to this Miracle, when he restored the
 "Nobleman's son to health, though he
 "was at the point of death, as his
 "Father thought : (iv. *Job.* 47.) and
 "this without touching, or coming near
 "him. For he did not stir from the place
 "where he was at *Cana*, and yet sent life
 "to him as far as *Capernaum*, by the sole
 "power of his command. After which
 "he proceeded to an higher Miracle; for
 "he restored another Ruler's daughter to
 "life, who died before he came to her
 "rescue. And again he exceeded this
 "Miracle, by raising up the woman's son
 "of *Naim*, when he was carrying out to
 "be buried. And at last (as hath been
 "before observed) he raised his wonder-
 "working power so high, that he called
 "*Lazarus* out of his grave, when he had
 "been dead four days.

"Thus

“ Thus he raises our minds by little
“ and little to the highest pitch of Faith;
“ to believe, that is, the Resurrection of
“ the dead. He teaches us to expect that
“ in generall, the experiment of which
“ he hath shewn in particulars, For, as
“ the Apostle saith, (1 *Thess.* iv. 16.) *the*
“ *Lord shall descend with a shout, &c.* at
“ the restauration of all things, to raise
“ the dead to a state of incorruption:
“ even so now, he that lay in his grave was
“ awakened *by the voice* of our Saviour’s
“ command, and shaking off his corrup-
“ tion, came whole and sound out of his
“ tomb; the bands wherewith his hands
“ and feet were tied nothing hindring.
“ Is this nothing to confirm our belief of
“ the Resurrection? when we have not
“ onely our Lord’s *word* for it, but, by
“ those whom he restored to life, we
“ have in *deed* a demonstration of what
“ he hath promised? What pretence is
“ there now for unbelief? Why do we
“ not slight all those who by Philosophy
“ and vain deceit set themselves against a
“ simple faith, and stick to this naked
“ confession, that there will be a resur-
“ rection of the body to Eternall Life?

And

And to make our holy belief more acceptable to all Christian Souls, let me briefly adde, That Faith being as certain a way of knowing as any other, Believers must needs be the most knowing men in the world. Which is a very great motive to Faith; whereby we are informed of a great many things, and those the most excellent, of which other mens minds are perfectly ignorant. It gives a new light to the Soul, whereby to see things invisible. There is no less then a whole world of things that Believers are acquainted withall, which are hid from their eyes who remain in darkness, by continuing in unbelief. While the thoughts of such Souls are confined within the narrow bounds of this visible world, and know but little of it neither; the Minds of Believers are enlarged beyond the limits of all things seen, to behold another and far more glorious world: in which *Jesus* is the Sun, and the *Angels* and Spirits of just men are the Stars, and the brightness of the *Divine Glory* is the Light and splendour. In this the ancient Christians justly made their boast. And there being a company of vain men, who pretended to be Tru-

L. v. Stro-
mat.

εἰς τοὺς ᾑσυχαστάς, men of intelligence beyond all others, but indeed unbelievers, *Clemens Alexandrinus* reproves their folly, and tells them, Ἡμεῖς ἐσμεν οἱ ἐν ταῖς ἀπιστομέναις πῖστοις, καὶ οἱ ἐν ταῖς ἀγνώστοις γινώσκοντες. *We are they who believe that which is incredible to others; and therefore are they who know that which is unknown to others.*

None so knowing as they that believe the Gospell: and therefore let us not shut this Faith out of our Souls, and thereby exclude the greatest Good. Nor let us think our selves unhappy, because we do not see that which we expect: For this would be to complain of our privilege and preeminence above those that depend merely on Sense, and will not be wise beyond the narrow confines of their eyes. Faith is that divine gift, whereby God raises our minds above the pitch of vulgar Souls. He brings us acquainted by this means with the most noble and glorious objects, and illuminates us with the most comfortable knowledge: without which we shall remain, notwithstanding all our other wisdom, in a sad dull night of ignorance and darkness,

And

And if this Faith touch our hearts also, it will raise us to as excellent a temper of spirit, and make us truly heavenly and divine. We shall feel it altering the very frame of our thoughts, designs, and desires. It will lead us to such a pitch of Vertue, that we shall adhere to God and goodness whatsoever befalls us; and solely depending on his promises, trust our selves with him, both when all other things fail us, and when we have the greatest supports that they can lend us. Which is no easie thing to flesh and blood, as *Philo* * excellently observes: **L. Quis rerum Divin. habes,* (for that inclines us to trust in riches, and power, and dignity, and friends, and strength of body, and a number of such things:) but *P. 493.* *μεγάλης καὶ ὀλυμπίας διανοίας ἔργον*, the work of a great and heavenly Mind, which cannot be inticed by any thing on earth to rely upon it. An example of which we have in *Abraham*; who believed God and obeyed his voice, when he called him from his own country and his father's house, *and he went out not knowing whither he went.* Divers such instances there are of the power of divine Faith in him and in others, in the xi. Chapter of the Epistle to the *Hebrews.*

From

From which we may certainly conclude, that nothing can be too hard for the Faith of *Christ*; which is built upon surer grounds and a stronger foundation then theirs was. It is of such mighty force, I have shewn, that one would think there needs no more to be done to make all the World good; but onely, by such means as I have declared, to implant this Faith in all mens hearts.

But such is the perverseness of humane Nature, that our work is not done, when the judgement is convinced. There must be new arts of insinuation used, by those convictions to awaken and ingage the affections. The Motives are certain and sure, strong and powerfull; but Men are weak and impotent, careless and unconcerned about their own good. After they know how things are, they must be made to consider; lest a quickning Motive lie in a dead hand or a cold heart, which draws forth none of its virtue. And there is no way, that I can think of, to stir them up to consideration, but by propounding a few sensibly-affecting Questions to them; which shall be part of the business of this last Chapter.

V.

I. Let him therefore that believes this Record, that God hath given us Eternall Life in his Son *Jesur*, ask himself *what he thinks in his Conscience is the way to this supreme Felicity*. May we live here just as we list, and yet hope hereafter to live with *Christ*? Or can we reasonably think to come to him without any thought about it; and to be received up to his heavenly Kingdom, though we mind nothing now but what we can get in this World? Strange! that Christian people should imagine Piety and Vertue to be things superfluous! and take the mortifying the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, to be nothing else but a piece of Monasticall austerity, and melancholick devotion! a thing which mere black choler and a peevish disposition makes men trouble themselves and the world withall! Are we so blind as to think, that a carefull endeavour after an inoffensive life towards God and towards men is but a precise Nicety; which may be commended in those that have nothing else to doe, but is of no necessity to our living eternally with God?

God? We cannot, sure, be so forsaken of our reason. No; nor think that the business of Religion is onely to hear the word of God, and to be frequently on our knees; and that we need not be so solicitous how to live and walk in the ways of God's Commandments. What man instructed in the Gospell can be so senseless, as to think by knocking often at heaven gates to get an entrance, though otherwise he stands idle? Do the Holy Books inspire us with any such conceits? Do they tell us some holy breath will waft us safe over the dangerous Sea of worldly affairs, troubles, pleasures, and temptations of various kinds? Needs there no labour at the sails or the oars? no wise guidance and steerage of the vessel? no guard and defence against pirates? but a man may confidently commit himself to the winds, and let his vessel run whither they will carry it? May he live, I mean, just as the course of the world hurries him, and as he is driven by the blast of outward accidents? sometimes this way, and sometimes the quite contrary? in good company and after some pathetick exhortations doing well, and then crossing all again when a new temptation to sin solicits him? Sure
such

such men, as can believe thus, fancy heaven a void and empty space, where company is wanting ; and imagine our Saviour cares not who comes thither, so it be but filled. They live as if all the regions above, the glorious Paradise of God, were but so much waste ground, which needs a Colony of Planters ; it matters not of what quality they are, so it be but inhabited. O vile thoughts ! that can imagine God wants the company of such as care not for him ; and that Heaven, which threw out the Angels that sinned, will entertain those who joyn with them in their foul rebellion ! It is a wonderful grace, that he will invite us on any terms to his most blessed society. We doe *him* no kindness, but *our selves*, in seeking his heavenly Kingdom. Into which if we will not enter at such a gate as he sets open ; we shall be shut out, and perish in our perverse ingratitude, or foolish presumption.

Consider, I beseech you, what do all these WITNESSES say concerning the way to it ? Do they not tell us, that *streight is the gate and narrow the way that leads to life ?* vii. *Matt.* 14. that we must *strive to enter ?* xiii. *Luke* 24. and

that there shall in no wise enter into the holy city any thing that defileth ? *xxi. Rev. 27.* and that without holiness no man shall see the Lord ? *xii. Hebr. 14.* Which we must therefore excite our selves, by his promises, to perfect in the fear of God; having cleansed our selves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. *2 Cor. vii. 1.* And giving all diligence, adde to our faith vertue ; and to vertue, knowledge ; and to knowledge, temperance ; and to temperance, patience ; and to patience, godliness ; and to godliness, brotherly kindness ; and to brotherly kindness, charity : For so an entrance shall be ministred to us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7, 11.* Examine every one of them, and they will tell you as much. The FATHER, by a voice from heaven, bids us hear his Son ; who says, Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven : but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. *vii. Matt. 21.* And the WORD saith, Blessed are they that doe his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. *xxii. Rev. 14.* Wherefore as the HOLY GHOST saith, To day

day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. iii. Heb. 7, 8. This was its language of old ; and it was poured also on the Apostles, that repentance and remission of sins might be preached in our Saviour's name among all nations. xxiv. Luk. 47, 49. Which is the end also of our being washed with WATER in his name : for we are baptized into his death ; and therefore ought to reckon our selves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortall body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. vi. Rom. 3, 11, 12. For his BLOOD was shed, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. ii. Tit. 14. For which end also he was raised from the dead, (by the Eternall SPIRIT,) that he might bless us, in turning every one of us from his iniquities. iii. Act. 26. And therefore this the APOSTLES say and testifie in the Lord, that we henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk. iv. Eph. 17. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God ; (saith St. Paul) who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit. i Thess. iv. 7, 8.

And if I should now send you to inquire, and ask for the old paths, as *Jeremiah* speaks; would you find that the ancient Christians knew any other way to bliss then this? Did they, who, while they were in the flesh, lived not according to it; who, being upon earth, had their conversation in heaven; whose lives excelled the best laws and statutes of their severall countries, which they strictly obeyed; who loved all, though persecuted by all; who blessed, when they were cursed; honoured those that treated them despitefully; did good to those who punished them as evill doers *, &c. did these men, I say, believe that Heaven might be wone onely by their prayers, or by perpetuall disputing about that Religion which they did not practise? How come we then to have so great a fondness for our selves, as to think that we shall carry that by the name and the profession of Christianity, which they could not get without so much labour? and to have such cheap thoughts of the Crown of glory, as to imagine it will bow and come down to those idle wishes, unto which there is nothing so mean in this world but scorns to stoop?

* Vid. pl.
apud Ju-
stin. Marr.
Epist. ad
Diognet.
P. 497.

That one thought is sufficient to convince us what we have to doe to be happy. I need not send you so far as those elder times; go but to your selves, and enquire how you doe in the affairs of this world. Sure, men never got their estates with so little care as they hope to get Heaven. Ask a man why he follows his business so close; and he will tell you, that an estate is not got by wishing: that a family cannot be provided for by lying in bed, or sitting by the fire-side: that there are opportunities, which must be narrowly watcht; and cheats, which are not easily discovered. And yet, to see the imprudence and inconsiderateness of Mankind! The same person thinks to go to Heaven, and possess all the treasures there, by his Prayers alone; though cold too, and but little observed: or by a lamie Repentance, which wants its effects: nay, by a death-bed groan, a few forced tears, and promises never performed: by some short snatches of Religion, a careless behaviour, and an unwatchfull life. He minds no occasion of doing or receiving good; is indifferent whether he lay hold of opportunities and good seasons; seldom thinks of the place whither he would

go; denies himself nothing to which he hath a mind; bridles no appetite; curbs no passion; nay, will be drunk for company; and swear, rather then be thought such a coward as to stand in awe of God, or to want the breeding of a Gentleman; and, in brief, doth not half so much upon the account of *Eternall Life*, as many a man does for a single-peny.

What a strange dulness is this, to imagine that all ends which we aim at must be compassed by means proportionable to their greatness, but onely the very greatest and last End of all? The Souldier gets not the victory by mere railing at his enemy; but, as the Apostle speaks, *2 Tim. ii. 3, &c. endures hardness, and entangles not himself with the affairs of this life.* And it is the labouring husbandman, as it there follows, *who partakes of the fruits.* All things in the world, as Solomon saith, *are full of labour.* And do we think that our Souls onely are exempted, and may be saved by doing nothing? that Vertue will grow there without our care? or that an eternall harvest of joy will spring up to us, without labouring to doe vertuously? It is a great shame to say it, but such are the hopes of foolish men;

men: who are perfectly like the *Israelites*, of whom God says, *x. Hof. 11. Ephraim is an heifer that is taught, to plow; but loveth onely to tread out the corn.* That is, as *D. Kimchi* glosses, they were taught the Law, and instructed to doe good; but minded nothing else, but merely to enjoy the promises in a fat and fruitfull Land which God had given them.

Let such remember, for a story sometimes sticks longer in their minds then the greatest reason, what a Wise man among the *Jews* said to a Friend of his, whom he met exceeding sad and dejected about some affairs which went cross to his designs. "What's the matter, said he, that
 "thou goest so heavily? doth any thing
 "of this world trouble thee? Yes, said
 "the other. And what hast thou got,
 "said the Wise man again, by all thy
 "care, solicitude and vexation? Alas!
 "replied his Friend, thou seest by my
 "troubled countenance how little I have
 "got. Then, said the Wise man, consider;
 "if of this World, which thou hast
 "followed with such diligence, thou hast
 "got so little; what art thou like to get
 "of the other World, which thou mindest
 "not at all? A very good Meditation

tion for those who, after all their labour and thoughtfulness, are like to leave no great matters to their posterity; and for those whose greatest cunning and industry is not able to bring about their ends. And it may lead us to another profitable Meditation, how unequal we are in our dealing; while we lay out so many thoughts, and so much labour, upon things we are not sure to obtain; and so few and so little upon those which, as sure as God is true, shall be the portion of them that diligently seek them. The Souldier is not sure to win the victory, after all the hardship he has endured. And the frost may nip, and the bitter winds blast, the laborious Husbandman's fairest hopes. There is no design, save onely that we have for Heaven, but, after our best diligence, may miscarry. What madness then is it, thus to misplace our endeavours, by imploying them so seriously about those things which frequently avoid us and fly from us; in the mean time neglecting those of infinite more value, which earnestly court us, and are desirous to bestow themselves upon us?

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But there is no need of so many words to awaken our thoughts, to judge aright in these matters. And yet this is all we have to doe for our Salvation, (when we believe the Gospel,) to think often what we believe, and expect to receive from the bounty of Heaven.

II. Which if every one did, it might spare me the labour of asking again, *whether we think in our conscience it is any great matter God demands of us, when he bids us, if we will obtain eternall life, obey his will revealed to us by Christ Jesus.*

Review the Christian Doctrine, a brief account of which I gave in the former Book; and when you have seen all that CHAP. V. you are to doe, or to deny and suffer for righteousness sake, consider to what it will amount. If we take it comparatively, and cast it into the scales against immortall Life and the weight of Glory, it will presently seem so little, light and inconsiderable, that we shall not think it worth the speaking of. But let us waive that advantage, and onely consider every thing in it self absolutely.

I. What

1. What great matter is it that we find God expects we should doe for him? Had he bid us govern the World, and rule the Nations of the earth; he had set us a difficult task indeed: But when he requires us onely to govern our selves, to set in order our affections, and to subdue our unruly passions, which give us no small trouble, and expose us to great danger; what a reasonable demand is this? and upon what easie terms does he offer Eternall life? We might have complained, if he had but required every one of us to be rich, and to get great estates; much more if he had expected we should be Philosophers, and be able to give an account of the secrets of Nature, and resolve all the questions we meet withall about the air and the water and the rest of the Elements: But when he onely bids us be content with our portion, and stay for what his wisdom will dispense to us, and make a sober use of it; and be so wise as to acknowledge him in all things, and to discern good from evil, and live vertuously in the enjoyment of him and of our selves, and give a reasonable account of all our actions; one may well wonder what men would have

have God to say, if they call this a very heavy burthen. But what if he should command us, with *Abraham*, to offer up an onely Son ; or to feed all our life upon bread and water ; or, with the Anchorets, dig our graves in the wilderness, and have no other tools but our nails to doe it ? should we not think it very hard ; though we cannot say, as we may of the former, that it is impossible ? And yet, comparatively speaking, Heaven would be a great bargain after all this. What a purchase then is it, when he calls for no Sacrifice but that of our *own bodies*, which we are to present him holy, chaste and pure, with true devotion and humility of spirit ; together with the *sacrifice of praise* continually ; *giving thanks unto him* for all his benefits ; and not *forgetting to doe good, and to communicate* ; which are all *reasonable services*, and *sacrifices with which God is well pleased* ?
xii. *Rom. i.* xiii. *Heb. 15, 16.* At what lower rate can Eternall life be set then this, that we will not be unreasonable ? When will we be pleased, if it will not satisfie us to know that God will give us Eternall life, provided we will live soberly, and be gratefull to him who is the giver of all good things, and doe to
others

others as we would that they should doe to us? Is God beholden to us, when we accept of these terms of Salvation? They that imagine this too great a mortification, and that they doe some mighty matter when they take this course to go to heaven, must mortifie that conceit, or it is not likely they will come thither.

2. But let us proceed, to consider what it is we must deny and suffer to attain this Felicity; and see to what the reckoning will come. If we put our sins into the number of those things we must forsake; it is apparent already, it would be a trouble to keep them. We are required indeed to *crucifie the flesh*; which seems an hard saying. But when we have enquired the meaning of it, there is no severity to be found in it. For it doth not oblige us to destroy, or so much as to impair, any faculty belonging to us: neither to weaken the Understanding, nor dull the Apprehension, nor overload the Memory; no nor consume our spirits, nor deform our bodies; nor prejudice our healths, nor spoil our beauty, or any thing else that God hath made. There is no true pleasure of which he deprives us; unless it be sometimes for a better and more excellent

excellent end. He onely abridges our unjust liberty, and limits the hurtfull excesses of our desires and passions; which we are not to gratifie against our reason, to the injury of our selves or our neighbours, and to the indangering the loss of some better good. In brief, He allows us to please our selves, so that every part of us be pleased; our Judgment and Conscience, as well as the lower Appetites. And what now doth all this amount unto, but the doing our selves a reall and intire kindness?

But in some state of things God will have us forsake all our worldly goods and possessions, for the kingdom of heaven's sake; as he required the Apostles and the first Disciples to Christianity. True. But do we not set too high a price upon these things, if we value our obedience at a great rate, upon this account? I will let alone the comparison we ought to make between our loss and our gain. Weigh things impartially by themselves, and consider what it is we part withall; should we suffer all our worldly goods to be taken from us, rather then part with our Religion. Do we lose any more then a Philosopher hath left of his
own

own accord, for the convenience of his study ; and that he might not be incumbered in his contemplations ? And while we had them, were all those things necessary for us ? Doth Nature require so much ? Did not a great many of them lie by us unused ? What a small matter now does the account come to, when we have made this abatement ? And how little reason is there, that the parting with these things should make such a noise, as if we had made some exceeding rich present to God's almighty love, from whom we received them ?

But let us look upon them again, together with the loss of life ; and consider, Are they things which we could have kept very long ? Do we any more then part with them a little before the time ? And what difference is there between their leaving us, and our leaving them ; but the advantage we have, by living a while after them, to give a proof of a little very short patience, and of intire trust in God, and absolute resignation to his will ? Let the things we leave for God's sake be rated as high as we please, all that can be made of them comes at last to this ; that, in obedience to God,
we

we let them go a little before we could not enjoy them. And suppose we be required to die; it is but to go another way out of the world, then we must shortly, perhaps presently, have done. There is no difference at all, but onely as much as there is between a sword, and an acute disease; between the flames of fire, and those of a burning fever.

But we may endure many torments, perhaps, in the world before we die; which are worse then death it self. It may be so; and there is a possibility, it may not be so. Now supposing we do not suffer any torments, what a small matter is it that God asks, that we may go to Heaven? where we shall have an Happiness so great, that we may well, *if need be*, (as *St. Peter* speaks,) consent to endure something that looks more like self-deniall then any thing I have mentioned, to obtain it. And yet when that necessity comes, this will arise to no great expense. It is no more then we may naturally suffer by the stone, or the gout, or by some such disease which may seize upon us; and not carry us to heaven neither. And it is likewise considerable, that wicked men many times take more
pains,

pains, and endure a great deal more then this comes to, to go to hell. Do we not see what attendance their lusts require from them? and that they make provision for their satisfaction with much solicitude and trouble? Nay, do not their expences frequently run very high, to gratifie some worldly or fleshly desire? One man breaks his sleep; another pines his body; a third consumes his estate; a fourth nourishes loathsome and foul diseases; a fifth breeds cruell and tormenting pains, which set him upon the rack; a sixth ventures his life, and runs the hazard of the gallows, or of a severer death. And all sinners contrive and plot and trouble their brains to find opportunities, and are often vexed with disappointments, and as often put to shame, and always troubled with their desires, till they meet with some satisfaction; and being never satisfied, are always troubled with their restless desires.

Let all these things be considered soberly; and then tell me, whether God demands great things of us, to obtain Eternall Life: and doth not rather wonderfully oblige us, in accepting so graciously our poor services; nay, carries us
from

from the happiness of doing his will here, to the happiness of having it rewarded with a most glorious recompence in another world.

And cast in this consideration also, (which *Clemens Alexandrinus* * pro-^{* Admon. ad Gentes p. 55.} pounds to the Gentiles,) how much many men would be willing to give, if it were set at a price, to purchase everlasting Salvation. And therefore what account can they give of their unwillingness to accept of that on such easie terms, which cannot be bought with all the gold, if we had it, of the fabulous *Pactolus*? We may purchase this most precious Salvation, if we will, οἰκεῖν θησαυροῖς with our own Treasure, which we have within our selves; viz. *Charity, and a lively Faith*. This is its just price, saith he, which God will gladly accept. For we hope in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of the Faithfull. But it cannot be obtained by any other means. For they that stick to this World as weeds do to the rocks in the sea, slight immortality; and judge themselves unworthy of the other World, which at so low a rate offered it self to their Faith and Charity.

But we have just reason to proceed a great deal farther then all this ; and supposing a man could alway live here without the least trouble, and in the fullest contentment that either his Soul or body can now enjoy, I ask again, *whether a man that believes the Gospell would be willing to have his Eternall life in this World:* and not rather chuse to go thither, where both Soul and body shall be so wonderfully improved, as to be capable of more solid, pure and durable pleasures, then this Earth can ever afford. He that considers how weak humane Nature is in this state, and how unable to entertain it self long with any of those things which please our senses, will not take much time to resolve this question. Should we be furnished with the best delights that Nature can crave, in the most perfect health and vigorous strength ; still we should find either fulness and satiety, or lassitude and weariness follow the enjoyment. This is a great part of man's vanity in his best Estate ; that all his fruitions either suppose, or make, a consumption of his spirits.

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And how short our understandings are and will be while we apprehend by the brain, and are forced to spend so much time in serving our bodily necessities, we cannot but be sensible: and therefore shall always be possessed with desires which cannot here be satisfied; and long to know those things, of which, should we stay never so many Ages here, we must remain ignorant. Who would not then, that hath any hopes in another world, freely consent to a dissolution, in order to a better conjunction of Soul and body; in a state of greater strength and spriteliness to enjoy a fuller good; with greater constancy, without any weariness or dejection of appetite, with perfect satisfaction, and an eternall pleasure in enjoying the same again?

And if we agree to this, judge then what reason there is to be exceeding solicitous to attain that heavenly Bliss, which so inconceivably transcends all that we can fancy to our selves, but are never like to enjoy, in this world. And judge again, how unworthy then this short, this troublesome life, which is but like a dream, full of distracted thoughts

and cares and fears, is, to come into any competition with that Eternall life which we expect. And once more, how mad they are, who prefer a brutall, wicked life, which mere rationall men have hissed out of the world; before that happy state, which far exceeds even the life of innocence in a Paradise upon earth.

IV. And let us hence take occasion to consider again; if it be not desirable alway to stay here on this Earth, *how far distant are they from the happiness of the other World, who have their thoughts very rarely there?* What shall we think of such careless believers, as love not to have their minds troubled with the thoughts of Death and of Eternall Life; with which they desire to have as little acquaintance as may be, till they come thither? Are they afraid of believing it too strongly, for fear it should spoil all their earthly delights, and make them lose the relish they have of bodily pleasures; or hinder their business, and make them have no list to follow it? There is no danger of this: for a lively belief of the Life to come heightens all our other joys, by making them innocent; and furthers our affairs, by making us diligent, but
not

not too solicitous. But some such fancy possesses the hearts of men; who have no inclination to entertain any familiarity with Heaven, till they think they are shortly to leave this Earth. For if we desire them to think often and seriously of Eternall Life, they return such an Answer as *Antipater* made to a man that presented him with a Book concerning Happiness, Οὐ χαλάζω, *I am not at leisure*: Tell me of this when I have nothing else to doe; now I have other more weighty imployments. This is the sense of mens gross negligence, and their seldom retiring to look up unto *Jesus*. Who justly expected not onely that greater multitudes, upon the publishing of such an incomparable glory and happiness, should become Religious; but that their Piety should arrive to a greater height of Vertue, by perpetuall contemplation of it. Christians, one would think, should love Vertue more dearly, and be more intirely devoted to the study of it, now that it hath such a dowry; then any Philosophers ever were, who loved it for it self, and thought it to be its own price and portion. And so they would, if they did not lay aside all consideration, and suffer the thoughts of Eternal Bliss to slip out of their minds.

It is a saying among the *Jews*, that when God first created Man, his stature was so tall, that he reached from heaven to earth, and could grasp all this world in his arms, as a very little thing. But *post peccatum Deus eum minuit ad centum cubitos*; after he sinned, God took him down to the height of an hundred cubits. And still as men grew worse and worse, they sunk lower, till they dwindled away, as we see by our selves, almost to Nothing. The Morall of it is very true. And if the Christian Faith, like the breath of life wherewith God inspired Man at the first, did thoroughly possess and renew our Souls; we should grow up again to such an excellent pitch, as to be above all the Earth, and tread it under our feet. At the very entrance of it, we should be inflamed with a most vehement desire and hope to grow till we be above the heavens, and made associates with the Angels, and sit down with our Blessed Saviour in his Throne. And the lively hope of this will make us presently discharge our selves of all those evill affections, which have degraded us and sunk us so low, that many men can scarce be discerned from the brutes that perish.

perish. They can speak, indeed; but that too is so sottishly unreasonable, as it onely serves to proclaim into what a pitifull condition they are fallen. Out of which nothing but the Christian Faith can raise us; which delivered the Gentile world from their Idolatry, and purged their hearts, when they lay ἐν τῇ χύσει κακῶν, as *Origen* often speaks, in the most confused mixture of all filthiness and impurity. It retains its virtue still, did we but inliven it by such affectionate considerations as these. Which make us so ashamed to continue wallowing in the mire, that they will not suffer us to content ourselves with a mean degree of purity; *but as he which called us is holy, so they press us to be holy in all manner of conversation.*
 1 Pet. i. 15.

V. And can any man now imagine, there is no danger at all in resisting so mighty a motive as this, to all well-doing? or that a man shall be no more miserable after his neglect of such great Salvation, then he would have been if no such proposall had been made to him? Where have those men lived? what have they been thinking of all their days, into whose hearts such a belief can enter, that Christians may sin

at as easy a rate as heathens? What? will despite done to such astonishing love of God to men, as is manifested to us, not at all inflame the reckoning? Can a man see the Kingdom of Heaven set open before his eyes, and offered to him; and after he hath so contemned it, as to prefer a little of this World before it, be used as favourably in hell, as if he had never heard of it? What doth our Saviour mean then, when he saith, It shall be more tolerable for *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah* in the day of judgment, then for those places where the Gospel of God's grace was preached? This very thing will make the fire more devouring, to think for what poor pleasures or gains they set at nought so stupendious a grace; and that with all they have lost those things for which they lost Heaven. When they see how inconsiderable all their past delights were, it will make the madness seem greater, and the more distract and torment their enraged Minds, to think how dear they now pay for them. The miserable Soul will then continually pour upon it self the hottest and most scalding thoughts of its own gross stupidity, and senseless negligence. It will flame with anger and burning wrath against

gainst it self, for the frantick choice which it hath made. And rolling it self in the fire of its own fretfull and impatient displeasure, will take such a furious revenge upon it self, as to become its own dreadful executioner. In this misery it will lie frying for ever; *sibi que perpetuum pabulum subministrabit*, and afford to it self perpetuall fewell, to keep alive the boiling rage and fierce displeasure it hath conceived against it self. The stings thereof will be sharper and more frequently returning, then any pain, which we are now sensible of, can represent. The flashes of Lightning are not so searching; and they will be as quick as the thoughts of a Spirit. And what the hideous and dolefull groans of a Spirit are, we cannot tell; especially that lies under the load of this thought, that it might have been as happy as now it is miserable.

You may take a review of what was said in the beginning concerning ETERNAL LIFE, and by that make some judgment of the Misery of those who are so unhappy as to lose it. They will be deprived of all that Bliss which the Souls and bodies of the just shall injoy; and
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not be able to avoid the sorest pains, which even from thence will necessarily arise. For the greater you can suppose their *knowledge of God* to be in the other World, (which is the *Life* of pious Souls,) so much the greater will their sorrow and heaviness be, to think that they have lost the favour of the Creatour of the World, the Fountain of all Good. And when they behold the glory wherein the just appear with our Blessed Lord, this will be a new grief to them, and most miserably afflict their hearts; whensoever they think what praise is given to those holy men whom they despised, in what glory they shine, and unto what dignity they are preferred; and on the other side consider their own shame and reproach, and how vilely they lie under a perpetuall curse, pronounced against them before Angels and men, by the Lord of all.

And it will increase the torment, to consider that they are the cause of all this misery, which they have drawn upon themselves. Their negligence will come to mind, which gave no heed to the Divine illuminations. Their contumacy also, which resisted the Divine motions. Their
horrid

horrid wickedness, into which they ran against the cries even of their own consciences. And these considerations they will not be able to avoid, nor put off the thoughts of the greatness of their misery. But they will stick close to them, and perpetually sting them; so that all their *Knowledge*, which is so comfortable to others, will breed in them the most exquisite grief and sorrow. This our Saviour means by *outer darkness*, into which they shall be cast. From whence we may guess in what conditions their *Wills* and their Affections must needs be: in which there will be *no love of God* at all; nothing, that we can conceive, but *envy* at the glory of the blessed; *hatred* of themselves, as the cause of all this mischief; *vexation* of heart, to see how great it is; and *desperation* of seeing it grow less.

But I shall pursue it no farther, because it would take up too much room in this discourse, which already begins to grow too big. I shall onely adde, that none knows what flames the breath of the Lord will kindle. The power of his anger is inconceivable; especially when incensed by the slighting of his love. And therefore what can we say of the dolours which
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the fire that never goes out, and the worm that never dies, when they meet together, will cause both in the Souls and bodies of such contemptuous sinners? Who will begin then to wish they had never been acquainted with the glad tidings of Salvation; that so they might have lain in some more private corner of the miserable World, in a bed of softer and more gentle flames, and without that open disgrace to which they will be exposed. What an ease would they think it, if they might but have the favour to houl among the poor *Indians*, and shriek no louder then other wicked *Pagans*; and have no worse Devills to lash them then the leud *Ma-hometans*, who never had a thought of any thing higher then a fleshly Paradise? And yet the *Pagans* themselves thought their condition would be bad enough, if they lived impiously; and that it was impossible to escape a just punishment in another world. As appears, among a number of other records, from that discourse I mentioned of *Gobryas*; who saith the first place men come into when they depart this life is Πεδίον ἀληθείας, the *Field of truth*. So called, because there Judges sit to examine how every one hath passed his life: and there is no way to evade their

their sentence by subterfuges or lies, (as his words are,) but they will dispose of all men with exact justice, according as they deserve. What they had some dark fancy of, is now plainly and clearly revealed unto us; who are instructed, that God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. xvii. Act. 31. And therefore we ought to be afraid of treasuring up unto our selves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them, who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, honour and immortality, eternall life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath; Tribulation and anguish upon every Soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew (we may say Christian) first, and also of the Gentile. ii. Romans 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

VI. Consider then, I beseech you, once more, (which is all the questions I shall ask,) what you are now resolved to doe. Will
you

you put it to the venture, whether you be immortally happy or no? Is it true that *Jesus* lives, and is the Lord of all, and will give Eternall life to his servants, worth more then all the pains they can take for it; but which cannot be wone by trifling and careless endeavours; and yet offers it self graciously to those that will accept of it on most reasonable terms, which we cannot refuse without the greatest disrespect to God and danger to our selves? Consider then, I beseech you, what is the wisest course for him to take that believes all this, and doth not think we have been all this time discoursing of a fiction. Is every man that reads these things resolved to become a new creature? and to say, as *St. Paul* did after he had seen our Saviour, *Lord, what wouldst thou have me to doe?* or as the *Israelites*, who beheld no such sights as are set before our eyes, *All that the Lord our God speaks to us, we will hear it and doe it?*

O that there were such an heart, as it there follows, in every one of us; that we would mind these things, and no longer neglect such great Salvation! For what will become of us, if, being thus convinced what we ought to doe, we should

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put away this Blessedness from us, and *judge our selves unworthy of Eternall life?* God forbid that we should be so wicked, and so miserable. Shall such glorious things, and so certain, be proposed to us, and few or none regard them? A Kingdom, a Crown of glory lie before us, and we scornfully overlook it? Wo be to us, that the *Father* from heaven should speak so often and so loudly, and we not hearken to his voice! That the *Eternall Word* should appear in glory, and we fools be taken more with fading beauties! That the *Holy Ghost* should descend from heaven, and the Devill still carry all before him! That the Lord *Jesus* should shed his precious *bloud* for us, and we not part with a vile affection! What is become of our wit? where do our Souls dwell? or what company have they kept, that they are grown so void of all reason? Or do they think themselves so wise, that they have found something better then God? something more valuable then Eternall life, and more certain too? When did the World get it self made so great a Good? On what day was it that it engaged hereafter to be more constant to its Friends? Where are the Witnesses, and the Seal to this bond?

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Ah wretched fools that we are, to let our Souls be cheated so easily of such an happiness! or rather thus to impose upon our selves with such weak and childish imaginations! Is any thing here grown so big, that we cannot see the disproportion between it and Heaven? or is this World of such grand concern to us, that we cannot be at leisure to hear what our Saviour offers us? Have we no greater regard to these *Witnesses*; then to suffer them to be baffled by every fleshly reasoning, though never so silly and inconsiderable? Let us bethink our selves a little better. Let us doe them so much right, as to examine them impartially; and then if they deserve not belief, let the Devill and the World take all. But if they declare beyond all exception, that *Jesus* is the Lord, and hath Eternall life, and will bestow it on those that obey him, let us not be so bold as to slight him any longer; but go and humbly tender our hearts to him, and give him thanks that he will accept them. Is his yoke, think you, uneasy, and his burthen too great a load? What was the load then which he carried, when all our sins were laid upon him? what a yoke was the
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Cross it self, and all the indignities that he suffered? And yet *for the joy that was set before him* (and which he hath now set before us) he endured all with admirable patience. And indeed what can be too hard for him, who knows he labours for an infinite reward? Do we not all part with things very desirable, for a small gain we are to get by the exchange? And how earnest, how fierce are we to drive on such a bargain? How contentedly can the tradesman lose his dinner on the market-day, rather then lose a customer, by whom he hopes to gain a shilling? All the traffick in the world is carried on by giving one thing for another; and many times upon a little advantage. And therefore what makes us so unwilling to part with any thing in the world that God calls for, when he offers to give us goods of inestimable value in the room of it?

It is not a small portion that he assures us in his love, but he says we shall *inherit all things*, and that for ever. When we have served him threescore years and ten, (and who is there, alas! that serves him so much?) he doth not promise to settle on us an estate of so little as four-

S f

score

score or an hundred years, of incomparable happiness in the next World; (though we count it no mean bargain here, to part with a Lease of 70 years for one of 80 that is of equall value;) but more then so many Ages, more then millions of lives, even an Eternall life with himself in the heavens. Is there not a vast difference? Is not the disparity inconceivable between what we lay out, and what we receive; and between the bargains we are so greedy of here, and this happy exchange which God offers us? Why then is it neglected, as if it were too dear at the rates on which it is proposed? Are we not willing to give so much for it? Or is not the security good which God gives us for those heavenly possessions? Look over the Evidences again which we have examined, and you will be ashamed to call them in question. And if you be satisfied, it will be a greater shame not to pursue this gainfull purchase, with the same eagerness, care and diligence, that we do our severall employments in this world. We ought to account that day best spent, not wherein we have got the most money, but wherein we have made some considerable improvement in true wisdom,
and

and done some singular service to our Lord *Jesus*, who is our hope. And in all our externall affairs let us exercise such justice, charity, thankfulness, and contented humility, that we may be able to say, if any body ask us what we are doing, *We work for Eternity.*

And that we may doe so, and not like *Esau* sell our inheritance for a mess of pottage, (which will not be worth the tears it will cost us in this world, if ever we reflect upon our folly,) let us often cast our eyes upon this Happiness, frequently meditate on the joy of our Lord, and study seriously those holy Writings, wherein these precious promises are recorded. The *Jews* are so proud of their Law, (which hath no such Jewels in it neither,) that they fancies the Angels contended with *Moses* about it; and would needs perswade him that it belonged to them*. I am sure *St. Peter* says, that those heavenly Ministers have so great a value for the Gospell, that *they desire to look into these things*: wondering that we Gentiles should be made, not onely fellow-citizens with the Saints, but, equall to themselves. They rejoyced when they heard the good news, that our Lord was

* *Pirke*
Eliczer
Cap. XLVI.

come down to men ; and it seems he hath told us things beyond all their expectation. Shall not we then set a due esteem upon them, and look into them, and consider them, who have them so near unto us, and are so much concerned in them ? Then it were better for us if we had no eyes, or if we lived in those places where no such things are to be seen : for none will be so miserable, as they that might have been exceeding happy, and chose to remain miserable ; and that when so few thoughts would have secured their happiness. For there is no way to be undone, but onely by not believing, or not considering the Gospell of God's grace. Secure but these two passages ; and strict piety will necessarily be our employment, and Eternall Life our reward. No temptation will be strong enough to make us neglect our work ; and, I am sure, *faithfull is he who hath promised*, and will not fail to pay us more then our wages.

VI.

And what now remains, but to put those in mind who obediently believe in the Lord *Jesus*, what cause they have to enter-

entertain themselves beforehand with great joy, in the comfortable expectation of God's mercy in Him to Eternall life? Let all his true-hearted Disciples, who hear his voice, and follow him, rejoyce; yea, let them be glad in him with exceeding joy. Let them say, O how great is the goodness of God! how rich are those blessings which he hath laid up for them that love him! how exceeding great and precious are the promises he hath made them! Our calling in *Christ Jesus*, how high is it! what is there nobler then his *kingdom and glory*? To which also he hath called us, *by glory and vertue*. Heaven and earth concur in the most glorious and powerfull manner to give us assurance, that it shall be well, exceeding well, with all those that love the Lord *Jesus* in sincerity.

Why should we suffer our selves then to be dejected at any accident in this world, which falls cross to us? Shall we take pet when any thing troubles us, and let our spirits die within us, who have such glorious hopes to live upon, and mightily support us? *Jesus* is alive: He is alive for evermore: And in him is Eternall life for all his followers. The *Fa-*

ber, the Word, the Holy Ghost, are come to comfort us with this joyfull news. The Water, the Bloud, and the Spirit, all say the same; and ask us why we are so sad, when life and immortality is brought to light by the Gospell. It is the desire of the Lord Jesus, that we would not mourn; as though he still lay in his grave, and could doe nothing for us. He is certainly risen, and gone into the heavens; where God hath made him exceeding glad with his countenance. And it will adde to his joy, if it be capable of increase, to see us rejoyce with joy unspeakable and full of glory. And therefore let us doe him the honour, to glory in his holy Name; and let us say alway, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us.* 1 Pet. i. 3, 4.

We ought to say so with joyfull hearts, even when death it self approaches; which of all other is the most frightfull Enemy of mankind, but is made our Friend

Friend by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light, through the Gospel. 2 Tim. i. 10. Which hath given us, as the same Apostle saith, such everlasting consolation, that it would be a great reproach to it to receive Death timorously; which Wise men, before our Saviour came, concluded might be, for any thing they knew, *πᾶν τὸ μέγιστον ἢ ἁγιάζων*, the greatest of all goods. Our Lord assures us they were right in their conjectures; and hath made that certain, which Socrates (whose words those are) left doubtful. And therefore we ought not to leave the world, as if it were the greatest unhappiness that could befall us. It is for him onely to fear death (as St. Cyprian speaks*) who would not go to Christ; and he onely hath reason to be unwilling to go to Christ, who doth not believe he shall begin to reign with him. This is the onely thing (as he writes a little after) which makes men take death so heavily, quia fides deest, because Faith is wanting; because they do not believe those things are true, which He who is Truth it self hath promised: But though they give credit to what a grave and laudable person promises, they are wavering about that which God

Plato Apolog. Socr.

* L. de Mortalitate, p. 208,

* Orat.
xviii.
p.284.

Fr. Arch-
angel.
Dogm. Ca-
balistica.

said, and receive it with an incredulous mind. For if they believed, they would entertain that which now seems dreadfull, as St. Greg. Nazianzen * says that blessed Martyr did; whose Death he doubts whether he should call his departure from this life, or rather, *πρὸς Θεὸν ἐκδημῶν, ἢ πρὸς πλήρωσιν*, his departure to God, or the fulfilling of his desire. And thus (if we may believe Calcidius) the famous Trismegistus died, saying to his Son that stood by him, My Son, hitherto I have lived an exile from my country; but now I am going safe thither. And therefore when, a little while hence, I shall be freed from the chain of this body, see that you do not bewail me as if I was dead. For I am only returning to that most excellent blessed City; whither the Citizens cannot arrive, unless they take death in their way. There God only is the Governour in chief; who entertains his Citizens with a marvellous sweetness: in comparison with which, that which we now call Life, is rather to be termed Death.

And what if, in our passage to it, we should fall into divers temptations, or trialls of our sincere affection to the Lord Jesus? There is no reason that this should

should dishearten us, and deaden our spirits: For it is the singular privilege of a Christian, to *rejoyce in the Lord alway*, (iv. *Phil.* 4.) especially when he suffers for righteousness sake. In that case the Apostles thought it an honour, that they were *counted worthy* to be beaten, and *suffer shame for his Name*. v. *Act.* 41. And St. James thought their example was not unimitable by other Christians, to whom he saith, i. 2. *My Brethren, count it all joy, when ye fall into divers temptations.* And so they did, as you read in the Epistle to the Christian Hebrews; of whom the Apostle gives this testimony, x. 34. *Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in your selves, that you have in heaven a better and enduring substance.* This consideration made them look upon the rapine, which the seditious people committed in their houses, without that dejection which on such occasions appears in other countenances. And yet they were men like our selves, who *walked by faith, and not by sight*; that is, did not enjoy the thing it self which they expected. 2 *Cor.* v. 7. And therefore what should hinder the same effect in our hearts, if we believe as they did?

And

And to shew the mighty power of this heavenly principle, these *three* things may be here pertinently noted, out of the records they have left us of their spirit in all their sufferings.

I. And first, I find, that when the heaviest cross lay upon them, the sense they had of things to come *supported* them under it with admirable resolution. This was the least effect of their holy Faith; which made them, when the hearts of others sunk under the load, and fell down, as we say, into their knees, stand like a strong pillar, which bears up the whole weight of the house, and never yield at all. The thoughts of what our Lord had promised, not onely preserved them from murmuring and repining at their present condition, (knowing what good provision he had made for them hereafter,) but from fainting, and being sluggish in their Ministry. *For which cause we faint not, or do not grow lazy, saith St. Paul: (knowing, that is, that he who raised up the Lord Jesus, would raise up them also:) for though our outward man perish, (or wear away,) yet the inward man is renewed (or grows*
more

more youthfull) *day by day.* 2 Cor. iv. 14, 16. And (2.) this faith also preserved them from *swounding fear*, either of disgrace, or pain, or death; being in *nothing terrified by their adversaries*: (saith the same Apostle i. *Phil.* 28.) who, seeing them undaunted under all their sufferings, had reason to look upon this as *an evident token of their perdition*, and of the *Salvation* God would give to these his valiant Champions. And (3.) from sorrowing also, and lamenting the loss of any thing; because this Good, they found, was still secure. 2 Cor. vi. 10. Which made them, as he there saith again, to be always full of joy, though in the eye of the world they lookt very sorrowfully. And so (*lastly*) they kept their steadfastness, and turned not away from the holy commandment delivered unto them. Whereby they marvellously promoted Christianity: *And the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternall glory by Christ Jesus, after that they had suffered a while, made them perfect, stablished, strengthened, settled them.* 1 Pet. v. 10.

II. But the hope of Eternall life did not merely support and uphold their spirits;

rits; it wonderfully *refreshed and comforted* them in all their afflictions : so that they durst confidently promise to all other suffering Christians the same heavenly comforts from God. *Who comforteth us* (saith St. Paul) *in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we our selves are comforted of God.* And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation. 2 Cor. i. 4, 7. Their comfort and rejoycing was, the testimony of their conscience, that everywhere they acted sincerely; (ver. 12.) and that they served a good Master, who had promised them better fare in the next World, where he reigns in full power and glory. His Kingdom, they knew, was not of this World, even as he was not of the World; and therefore they did not expect he should give them a portion of good things here. No; He told them plainly, *in the World ye shall have tribulation*; but adds in the same breath, *be of good chear, I have overcome the World.* xvi. Joh. 33.

III. Which victory of his over death and the grave encouraged them to follow him

him in all their tribulations, not merely with simple *comfort*, but with *joy*, as I have observed already; and more then that, made them *exceeding glad*, and even *shout for joy*. So our Saviour himself required them to doe, when they were reviled and persecuted for his Name sake. v. *Matt. 12. Rejoyce, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven.* And so they did, as St. Paul tells us v. *Rom. 2, 3. We rejoyce in hope of the glory of God; and not onely so, but we glory in tribulations also.* For they had this *strong consolation*, as the Divine Writer to the *Hebrews* calls it; *First*, that nothing, either in this World or the other, could take away that heavenly Good from them. As St. Paul also testifies in that triumph of his, viii. *Rom. 38, 39. I am perswaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* When their goods were taken away, they could make their boast in *Christ*, and say, Our inheritance is immovable. When they were driven from house and home, (as we speak,) they could triumph, and say,

say, *Our house is eternall in the heavens,* from which none can exclude us. When they were in pain, they still remembered our Saviour's own words, *Your joy shall no man take from you.* In death it self they could glory, and say, *Jesus, our Life,* dies not; and *because he lives, we shall live also.* And (2.) as they knew they could not lose their future Happiness, so they knew it to be incomparably greater then all their sufferings. viii. *Rom. 18.* *For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.* *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternall weight of glory.* 2 *Cor. iv. 17.* Where there is a *Third Reason* of their exceeding great joy; because these afflictions, which they endured for *Christ's* sake, would increase their glory hereafter, and make their crown beyond all expression heavier. And more then that, (4.) hereby not onely their present afflictions were alleviated and seemed triviall; but they gave them a clearer sight of that most excellent glory beforehand: *while they looked not* (as it there follows ver. 18.) *at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.* The removall
of

of these things here below from before their eyes, fixed them more stedfastly on the invisible World. Now *their joy was full*, as our Saviour speaks xvi. *Joh. 24.* now it overflowed; when all things else had forsaken them, and nothing else but those unseen enjoyments remained to comfort them. This heavenly glory shone brightest in the dark and horrible pit: where their afflictions brought them sweeter contentment, then ever was the fruit of any earthly pleasure. And so we may still hope, that when other things, by any calamity in this world, stand afar off, and can doe nothing for us; there will be the more room for the thoughts and sense of this future bliss, to spread it self, and fill the whole capacity of pious hearts. Then they will be most at leisure; then invisible things will seem most reall; then they will most strongly affect the heart: so that they will not be the worse for their afflictions, but the better; and their pains will but bring them the sooner to heavenly joys.

And should not our Faith work thus mightily in our hearts, at least supporting us with true satisfaction under all our troubles, it would be an exceeding great shame

shame to us : when we consider with what resolution, courage and chearfulness, they, whose knowledge of heavenly things was darker then ours, received the most dreadfull sufferings, even death it self, before the coming of our Saviour. The Mother and her seven Sons, whose story is recorded in the second Book of the *Maccabees*, Chap. vii. are a famous instance of this ; who in hope of a blessed Resurrection, when the belief of it stood on a feebler foundation then ours, offered themselves to the sharpest torments, rather then break the Law of their Creator. “ Neither the Strapado, nor the “ Wheel to rack their joynts, nor Hooks “ of iron to tear their flesh, nor the fury “ of wild Beasts, nor boiling Caldrons, “ nor the fiercest Fires, no evill present, “ no evill to come, could move the hearts “ of these young men, who were in their “ flourishing years ; or make them yield “ a jot to the wicked tyrant, who would “ have had them transgress the Ordinances of *Moses*. They are the words of that great man, *St. Gregory Nazianzen* ; who hath admirably summed up their speeches, in an Oration of his which he made in their commendation : where he proceeds in this manner. “ One of the “ Bre-

*Orat. xxii.
de Max-
imiano,
p. 401, &c.*

Brethren spoke in one fashion, and the
 rest in another ; according as the words
 of the Tyrant, or the order of their suf-
 ferings, gave occasion. But to comprise
 all in a little compass, this was the sub-
 stance of what they said. O King *Antiochus*,
 and all you that are here pre-
 sent, be it known unto you that we
 have one King, even *God Almighty*,
 from whom we come, and unto whom
 we must return. And we have one
 Law-giver, *Moses*, whom we will ne-
 ver betray nor reproach ; though ano-
 ther *Antiochus*, more fierce and severe
 then thou, should threaten us. *Μίξ*
ἡσυχία, τῆς ἐντολῆς ἡ τήρησις. Our
 onely security is, to keep the command-
 ment ; and not to break the law where-
 by we are guarded. Our onely glory
 is, for such great things to despise all
 glory beside. Our onely riches are, the
 hopes we have hereafter. Our onely
 fear, lest we should fear any thing
 more then God. With these reasons
 we now come armed into the field of
 danger. We are but young, it is true,
 and this World is sweet ; our native
 Country, our Friends, our Kindred, our
 dear Companions ; invite us to stay
 with them. But none of them are so

T t

"sweet

“sweet as God, none so dear as those
“very dangers, which we expose our
“selves unto for Vertue’s sake. Harbour
“no such thoughts, we humbly beseech
“you; for there is another World also
“which expects us, more lofty and du-
“rable by far then all that we behold in
“this. *Jerusalem* that is above is our
“Country; which no *Antiochus* can be-
“siege, no power on earth can touch or
“indanger. All those that are born of
“God, are our Kindred: the Prophets
“and Patriarchs our Friends, from whom
“we have received a pattern of piety.
“And our Companions are all those who
“hazzard themselves with us this day,
“and are our contemporaries in constant
“suffering. Heaven is more glorious
“then our Temple it self: the Quire of
“Angels infinitely beyond our solemn
“Assemblies: And there is one great
“Mystery, GOD himself, whom all our
“sacred Mysteries here respect. And
“therefore cease to make us any more
“offers and promises of little things,
“which are nothing worth. We love
“not those shamefull honours, which we
“shall get by denying God. We were
“not bred to make such unthrifty bar-
“gains; and cannot traffick with thee
“on

“ on such base and ignoble terms. And
“ therefore cease also to threaten us; or
“ we can return more dreadfull threat-
“ nings, which will reprove thy weak-
“ ness. For know that we have a fire,
“ into which to throw our Persecutours.
“ Dost thou think thou hast to doe with
“ Gentile people? Those, it is true, thou
“ hast overcome: they have yielded to
“ thy threatnings and power. And no
“ wonder; for they did not fight for
“ such glorious things as we. They on-
“ ly defended their cities and goods; but
“ we defend the Law of the most High.
“ Thou opposetest thy self now against the
“ Tables writ with the finger of God;
“ against the most holy and divine Ser-
“ vice; against the Rites of our country,
“ which reason and time have made ho-
“ nourable; against seven Brethren, who
“ are linkt together by one Soul; whom
“ it is no such mighty business to over-
“ come, but to be worsted by them will
“ be most shamefull. And be assured,
“ we will set up seven Monuments of
“ thy disgrace: for we are the progeny
“ and disciples of those who were led by
“ a pillar of fire and a cloud; to whom
“ the Sea parted it self, and the Sun stood
“ still; and Bread rained down from hea-

"ven; and who triumphed over mighty
 "kings, by prayer and lifting up their
 "hands to heaven. And to say some-
 "thing that comes within the compass of
 "thy knowledge, we are bred up under
 "Eleazar, whose fortitude and courage
 "thou art not ignorant of. The Father
 "led the way; the Sons follow him to
 "the like combate. Therefore it is to
 "no purpose, to adde any more threat-
 "nings: we can suffer greater things
 "then those thou speakest of. Οὐδὲν
 "ἰσχυρότερον τῷ πάλαι πατέρει ἐτοίμαον,
 "There are none more valiant then they
 "that are ready to endure all things. Why
 "do you delay to begin your cruelty?
 "what do you stay for, or expect? Do
 "you think we may change our minds,
 "and recant? No; we protest again
 "and again, we will never eat impure
 "flesh: we will never break the Law of
 "our God. Thou shalt sooner turn to
 "our Religion, then we to thine. Let
 "hotter fires be kindled; let more rave-
 "nous beasts be brought forth; let more
 "exquisite torments be invented: in
 "short, either devise some new punish-
 "ment, or know that we despise these
 "that are before us.

These,

These, saith he, were their words to the Tyrant ; in the relation of which I am wonderfully delighted. And then embracing and kissing one another, with no less chearfulness then if they had been come to receive their reward, “ Let us
“ go, said they with a loud voice, let us
“ go to meet these dangers. Let us make
“ haste, while the Tyrant is hot and
“ chafes ; lest he cool again, and we lose
“ the Salvation. What though it cost us
“ our lives ? must not we leave them
“ some time or other ? must we not pay
“ the debt we owe to Nature ? Let us
“ convert then a necessity, into our choice
“ and a glory. Let us deceive the grave ;
“ and make that peculiar, which is com-
“ mon. By death, let us make a purchase
“ of life. Let none of us faint in our un-
“ dertaking, nor be desirous to live here
“ any longer. Let us make the Tyrant
“ despair of moving others, by seeing our
“ constancy. Let him appoint our suf-
“ ferings, we will put an end to them.
“ Let us make it appear that, as we are
“ Brethren by birth, so we are in all
“ things else ; not excepting death.

Such was the resolution, saith he, of these men; who did not serve pleasure, nor suffered themselves to be governed by their passions: but purified their bodies and their spirits, and in this manner were translated *εις τὴν ἀπαρχὴν ζωῆς*, to that life which is incapable of any passion, and free from all the troubles and miseries to which here we are exposed. It would be too long to relate the speech of the Mother; who likewise gave an illustrious testimony of her faith in God, and hath left a rare example, to all posterity, of constancy and patience under the greatest sufferings. The Apostle himself hath perpetuated their Memory in his Epistle to the *Hebrews*, and made it sacred to all generations. Where it will stand to our great confusion, if we should not learn of those who had so great a Faith, under so dark a revelation. What would not these persons have done, saith the forenamed Father, if they had lived in our times; who were so courageous before the sufferings of *Christ*, and the glory (I may add) that followed after? If without example they behaved themselves so undauntedly; what rare Souls would they have been with one; especially

cially with the example of *Christ Jesus* ? Such we ought to strive to be, not onely as they were, but as we conceive they would have been under our Master. *Strengthened*, I mean, as *St. Paul* speaks, with all might according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light. i. *Col. 11, 12*. And so we shall, if the same spirit of faith be in us that was in them. For it tells us how *Jesus* went this way to heaven; and that if we overcome, we shall shine with him in his glory, and sit down with him in his throne, and inherit all things.

There need no more be said to encourage even those Christians who have been most delicately bred, or that are of the tenderer Sex, to wade through the greatest difficulties. Let them but look up unto *Jesus*, and He will inflame them with such ardent love, that they will be glad to follow him to his Cross, if they must go that way to come where He is. This moved *Dorotheus* and divers other Courtiers, (who, as *Ensebins* * reports, * *L. viii. Eccles. Histor.* were βασιλικοὶ παῖδες, of the Emperour's

Bedchamber, and in such high favour, that they were no less beloved then if they had been the Emperour's own children,) to prefer the reproaches and pains of piety, and the new-devised deaths they were to suffer for its sake, before all the glory and delights wherein they lived. And St. Peter, we are told by *Clemens Alexandrinus* *, seeing his own Wife led to death, rejoyced at the grace to which she was called; thinking now she was upon her return home. And chearfully exhorting her to proceed to the execution, he called her by her name, saying onely these few words, Μεμνηθε το Κυριου, REMEMBER THE LORD. That was sufficient, he knew, to make her constant and courageous: *It being a faithfull saying*, (an undoubted principle of Christianity, on which we may ever safely build,) *For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.* 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12. And it was no less steadfastly believed, that they who suffered with him should also reign with him in a greater glory then others; as we heard before from St. Paul, who saith, their afflictions would work for them a most ponderous crown of glory. Nay, they

* L. vii.
Stromat.
p. 756.

they gave the like encouragement to all those who did any eminent service to our Blessed Lord. They that *laboured hard*, for instance, *in the Word and Doctrine*, St. Paul saith, *were worthy of double honour*, or reward, in this World. 1 Tim. v. 17. Which few receiving, (but quite contrary, they were least esteemed, as he himself found by experience, who took the most pains,) there was the greater reason to hope to find it in another life: when the *chief Shepherd* appearing, they were sure to receive *an excellent crown of glory*. 1 Pet. v. 4. To every Saint our Lord promises a *crown of glory*: (as those crowns were wont to be called, that they used in times of greatest joy:) the word *ἀμαράντινον* added to it (which is never used in any other place of Scripture, and is that whereby some of the crowns given to persons of desert in other Nations are called,) denotes, I think, something extraordinary in the glory of those good Shepherds, who fed the flock of God according to the directions the Apostle had been giving them.

The *Martyrs*, we are sure, expected it; who building on this foundation,
that

Victor U-
ticensis
L. iv. Van-
dal. Persec.

that they who suffer with him, shall reign with him, gave God thanks when they received the sentence of death; and went to the execution singing; and expired with hymns in their mouths; and exhorted others, in the midst of their torments, to the like chearfull constancy. Of all which I could produce instances out of the Ecclesiasticall story; but I shall only set down that of *Liberatus* and his Monks. Who defending the Christian Faith against the Heresy of *Arius*, when they were condemned to be thrown bound into a ship full of faggots, and there to be burnt in the midst of the Sea, sang aloud this hymn; *Glory be to God in the highest. Behold, now is the acceptable time: Behold, now is the day of Salvation; in which we suffer punishment for the faith of our God.*

And why should not this faith, much more easily, comfort us against the death of our dearest Friends; when we can reasonably hope they depart from us, to go into the eternall Happiness of a better World? Their gain is so great, which they have made by the exchange, that we ought not so heavily, as we are wont, to take our own loss. This *Photius* represents

presents very handsomely to his Brother
Tarasius; after he had said a great many
other things, to stop the tears that he
shed immoderately for a daughter who
was dead. "Suppose, saith he, thy Daugh-
"ter should appear to thee, and, taking
"thee by the hand, should kiss it with
"a chearfull and smiling countenance, say-
"ing, My Father, why dost thou afflict
"thy self in this manner? why dost thou
"bemoan me, as if I was gone to an e-
"vill condition? My lot is faine unto
"me in Paradise; a place most sweet to
"behold, and far sweeter to enjoy:
"*μεῖζω δὲ τῶν αἰσθητῶν ἡ πόσις*, but the
"experiment exceeds all belief. Into
"this the crooked Serpent cannot wind
"himself, as he did into that of our Fore-
"fathers; nor so much as whisper any
"of his deceitfull temptations. There
"is none among us, but whose Mind is
"impregnable, and cannot be overcome
"by any artifice; nor can we desire to
"be gratified with any greater good.
"For we are all of us wise, with the Di-
"vine and heavenly wisdom; and our
"whole life is a continued magnificent
"festivall, in the enjoyment of infinite
"and unspeakable goods. Splendidly
"cloathed, we see God in a splendid
"manner,

Epist.
CCXXXII.
p. 352.

“manner, (as far as man can see him;)”
“and ravished with his inexplicable, in-”
“conceivable beauty, we rejoyce alway,”
“and are never weary. Which abun-”
“dant pleasure is the very perfection of”
“love; and the power of enjoying ac-”
“companying love, begets that ineffable”
“joy and exultation of spirit. So that”
“now, while I converse with thee, a”
“most mighty love to those things draws”
“me away, and suffers me not to ex-”
“pound the least part of them. Thou,”
“and my dear Mother, shall one day”
“come thither; and then confess I have”
“said very little of such great Goods;”
“but accuse thy self very much for be-”
“wailing me, who happily enjoy them.”
“Therefore, my dearest Father, let me”
“go away with joy, and do not detain”
“me any longer; lest thou suffer a grea-”
“ter loss, and for that be more bitterly”
“afflicted.

“If thy Daughter, I say, could after”
“this or the like sort speak to thee,”
“wouldst thou not be ashamed to con-”
“tinue thy lamentations? and chuse ra-”
“ther, with joy to let her go away re-”
“joycing? Consider then, if upon a”
“Child’s saying such things, we should”
“present-

“ presently grow better, and be of good
“ comfort ; shall we, when our common
“ Creatour and Lord cries, *He that be-*
“ *lieveth in me, though he die, yet shall he*
“ *live* ; and, God hath prepared for them
“ *that love him such things as eye hath not*
“ *seen, nor ear heard, neither have they*
“ *entred into the heart of man* ; be not
“ thing better for such joyfull tidings,
“ but, like infidels, go on still to increase
“ our sad lamentations ?

We cannot answer this Question any other way, but by silence ; or, rather, chearfull thanksgivings to God, who hath given us such *everlasting consolation, and good hope through his grace*, as may well enable us to say in every other troublesome condition, *Why art thou thus cast down, O my Soul ? why art thou disquieted within me ? Hope in God*, and rejoyce in his holy Name, who, thanks be to his goodness, giveth us the victory, through our Lord *Jesus Christ*. Let us shake hands with grief, sadness and sorrow ; and leave them to those who have no hope of Eternall Life. Let us make our boast in the Lord, and say *that He is good ; for his mercy endureth for ever*. Come, my Soul, what is it that afflicts thee ?

thee? Will not the thoughts of the joys of heaven give thee ease, nay perfectly cure thee? Will not a sight of *Jesus*, sitting on the throne of his glory, revive thee? It is but a moment or two, and we shall be with him where he is. Let us have patience for a few days more of banishment from our heavenly country. Hold out, my Soul, for a short pilgrimage, and we shall arrive at our promised inheritance. Shall we bemoan ourselves thus miserably, for whom our God hath made such gracious provision? Shall we be weary, who want but a few steps, and we are at our eternall rest? Behold, behold thy Saviour: Yonder he is: I see him shining in his celestial glory. He looks upon me, methinks, and saith, Be of good chear, for I am preparing a place for thee.

Do we not forget, O my Soul, that *Jesus* is so highly advanced; when we suffer our selves to be thus cast down and sadly dejected? Do we not reproach his memory, and, in effect, say too grossly, He is dead, He is not risen; who can chuse but mourn and be sorrowfull? For shame let us stay our tears, till the testimonies we have heard can be disproved;

ved; till it appear that *Jesus* is still in his grave, and these are Six false *Witnesses*, which stand up for him. But in the mean time let us rejoyce, that they never yet could be confuted; but have born down all the opposition of the World and the Devill for more then Sixteen hundred years, to the eternall honour of *Jesus*.

O sweet Name! why do we dishonour it with four faces, and sad countenances, and a melancholick life? If he live, sure he will be as good as his word, that we shall live also. Let us never forget those words of grace, *Because I live, ye shall live also*. And let us never remember them, but with new delight. Let it delight us to repeat them a thousand times in a day. As long as we live, let us comfort our selves with this; Our Lord hath said, *Because I live, ye shall live also*. Doth it not fill a Merchant's heart with joy, to hear that his Ship is arrived at a safe port; though many leagues from his own house? Doth not the Country-man look brisk when his Seed-time is good; though he must wait many weeks before he reap his desired Harvest? Let not us then be the onely lumpish insensible things,

Psal. lvi.
10, 11.

things, who hear the joyfull news that *Jesus* is alive, and safely arrived at our Father's house; where there are many Mansions. Let not us be so stupid as to be discontented, who have his word for it, that we shall live with him. But let us rejoyce, and say as the Psalmist doth, (we have more reason for it,) *In God will I praise his word: in the Lord will I praise his word. In him have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man, or any thing else, can doe unto me. Jesus hath said I shall live: I will depend on his word; and expect, after all my tossings up and down in this troublesome World, to land shortly in the Paradise of God.*

Paradise! O that comfortable word! that sweetest of all words! What should we not have given to hear of any hopes of it, if God had not promised it? And shall we now make light account of it? God forbid. We will not sigh at the thoughts of death it self; seeing it is but the gate of Paradise. We will look upon it with a smile, and say it is welcome. We will tell it that it is a long-lookt-for friend; and bid it doe its office, and make way for our entrance into the place
that

that *Jesus* hath prepared for us. What though we have not much acquaintance with that World? what though it be a place where we never were; and from whence no Friend that is gone thither hath returned, to tell us what it is? *Jesus* knew it very well, (that's enough;) else he would not have endured so much for it. He is perfectly acquainted with it; for from thence he came, and there he is. And therefore let us not be timorous, when we think of removing to a strange country; but confidently rely on his knowledge more then our own. Let us remember the words of these *Witnesses*, which say, *He is the Son of God, in whom is Eternall Life.* Let us trust his judgment, who thought it more desirable to go away, though upon a Cross, then to stay here in the greatest pleasure. And since all these *Witnesses* say, He is in heaven; let us resolve that we will die looking up to him, and saying,

Lord, remember it is the will of the Father, that we should have Everlasting Life. Thou thy self appearedst to St. Stephen, and madest him confident thou wilt receive our Spirit. The *Holy Ghost*, which is the Spirit of Truth, saith thou

art glorified, and wilt glorifie us with thy self. This thou hast preached to us. This thy *Bloud* hath purchased for us. This thou didst *rise again* to prepare, against our coming to thee. This thy holy *Apostles* say thou sentest them to publish to the World. This thou hast made us believe, and wait for, and suffer for, and long to enjoy. O Dearest Lord, and most mercifull Saviour, who art the *true and faithfull Witness*, though we miserable sinners deserve to be denied, yet deny not thy self: let not the price of thy precious Bloud be lost; let not the Word of the Father, of the Holy Ghost, thine own Word, fail. If thou art not alive, I am content to perish. But if thou art, as thou hast perswaded me; then I will not cease to call upon thee: I will die with these words in my mouth, and be confident thou wilt hear me, **LORD JESUS, RECEIVE MY SPIRIT.**

Thus the blessed Martyr *St. Stephen* expired; looking up stedfastly unto *Jesus, the Authour and Finisher of our Faith*, who then appeared in glory to him. Whose example all the rest of that Noble Army followed; triumphing over death,

death, in an assured hope of immortall life. Which they had not the least doubt of, it is manifest from hence, that (as *Clemens Alexandrinus* observes*) *ἐν αὐταῖς τῇ πολάσει τὰς ἀκμαῖς εὐχαριστοῦσι τῷ Θεῷ*, in the very extremity of their torments they gave thanks to God, who they knew would reward their fidelity; having in this very way consecrated *Jesus* to the highest Office, of being the *Finisher* or *Crowner* of our Faith. Therefore their heart was glad, and their glory rejoyced: And they sang cheerfully, with the holy Psalmist, but with a far greater confidence; *God shall redeem my Soul from the power of the grave, for he shall receive me.* xlix. *Psal.* 15.

* L. vii.
Stromat.
p. 756.

And, O thou Lord, and Creatour of all things, especially of this thy Workmanship! O thou God, and Father of thy Men! O thou Lord of life and death! O thou benefactor of Souls, and dispenser of all good things! O thou who didst form all things, and in due time, thou best knowest how in the depth of thy wisdom and administration, wilt transform us, by that Divine Artificer, the WORD! Receive me also hereafter, when thou seest

most

Greg. Naz.
Orat. x. in
Casarium
fratrem,
p. 176.

most convenient; in the mean time governing me in this flesh, as long as it will be profitable. And receive me in thy fear, prepared, not disturbed, nor hanging back at the last day, and dragg'd by force from hence. (like the lovers of the World and the Flesh,) but chearfully and willingly, into that everlasting and blessed Life which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Jd. Orat.
xlii. εις το
2ου Πά-
22. p. 696.

And, O thou WORD of God! thou Light! thou Life, and Wisdom and Power! (for I delight in all thy Names:) O thou Off-spring and Image of that great Mind! O intellectuall WORD, and visible Man, who upholdest all things by the word of thy power! May it now please thee to accept of this Book, (though not the first-fruits, yet the last perhaps that I may be able to offer thee,) both as a gratefull acknowledgment for all thy benefits, and an humble supplication, that I may have no other troubles, beside the necessary, sacred ones of my Charge. Stop the fury of any disease which may seize on me; or thy sentence, if I be removed by thee. And if thou art pleased to grant me a dissolution according to my desire, and I be received into the Heavenly Tabernacles; there I hope to offer acceptable

table Sacrifices to thee, at thy holy Altar,
O FATHER, and WORD, and
HOLY GHOST : for to thee be-
 longs all Glory, Honour, and Dominion,
 for ever and ever. Amen.

THE END.

*Books written by the Reverend Dr. Patrick,
and Printed for Richard Royston at
the Angel in Amen-corner.*

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